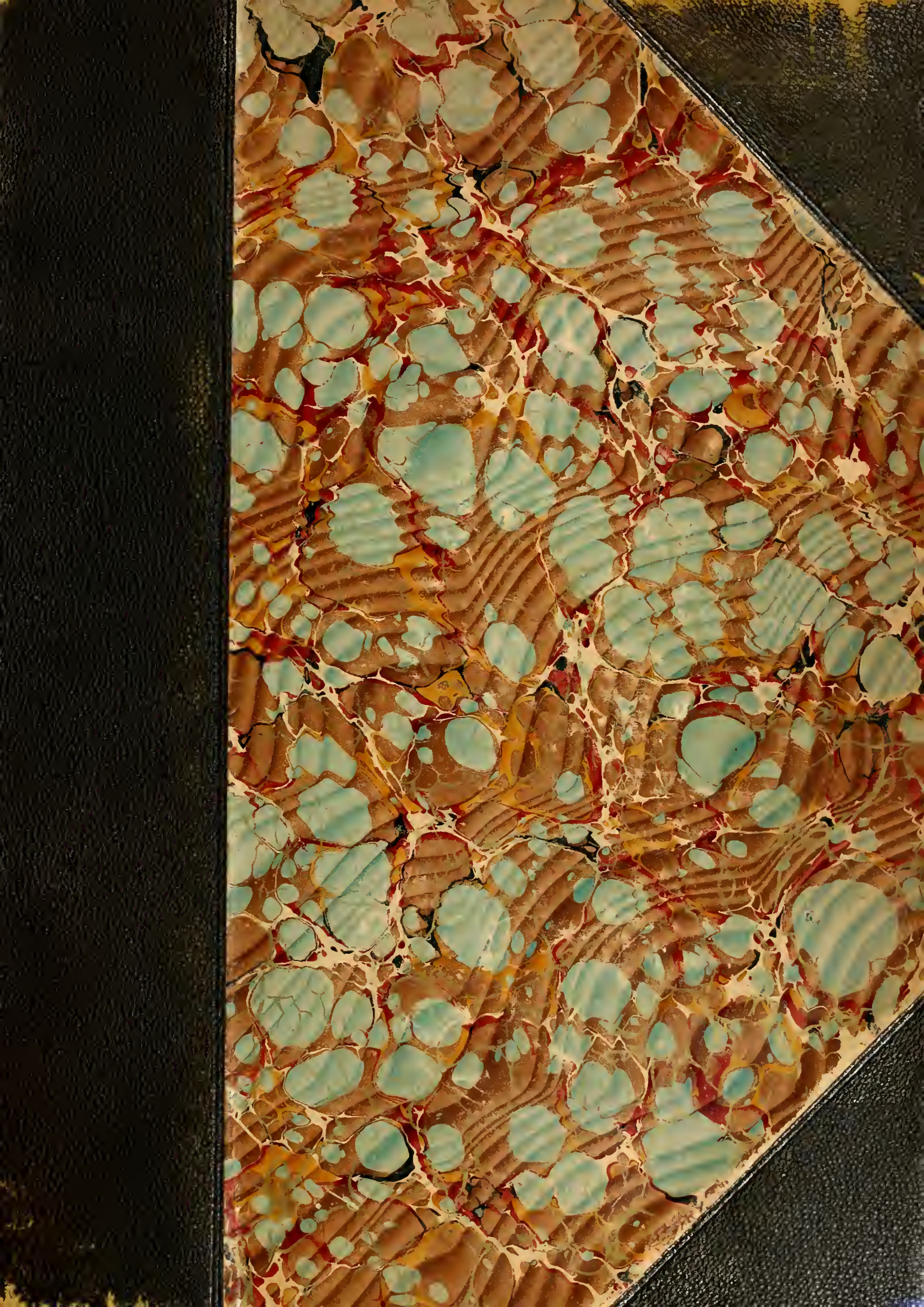

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and the AGE of DISCOVERY

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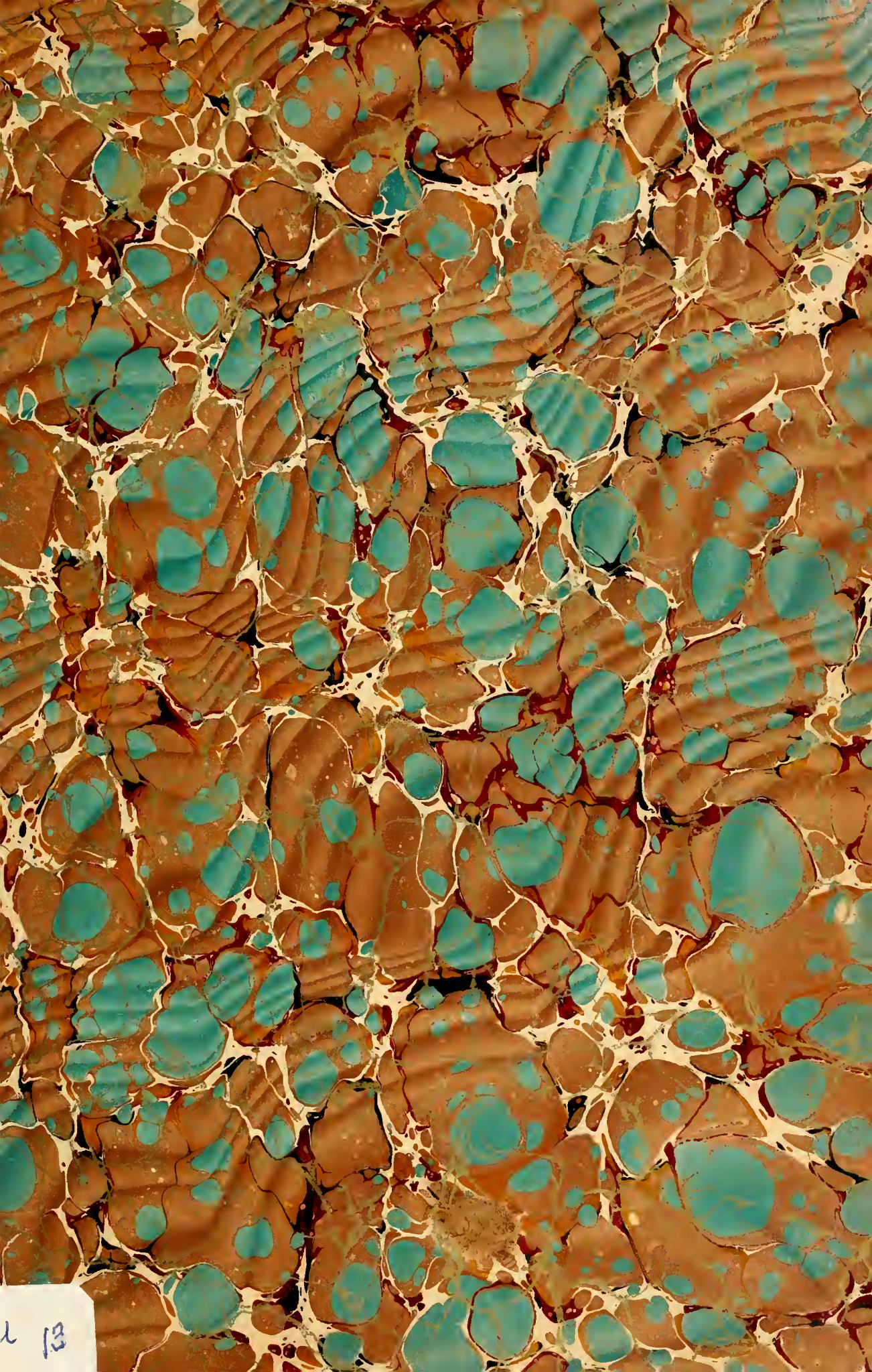

CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS

AND THE

DISCOVERY OF THE NEW WORLD

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CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS

AND

THE DISCOVERY OF THE NEW WORLD

FROM THE FRENCH OF

M. LE MARQUIS DE BELLOY

WITH FIFTY-ONE DRAWINGS ON WOOD AND SIX ETCHINGS

BY LÉOPOLD FLAMENG

LONDON:
MARCUS WARD & CO., 67 AND 68 CHANDOS STREET STRAND
AND ROYAL ULSTER WORKS, BELFAST
1878

CONTENTS.

TO MY NEPHEW,
RENÉ DE CHAUVIGNY.

My Dear Nephew,

I was about your age, and was serving my apprenticeship on board an old government transport that carried both guns and cargo, when one morning at break of day I was suddenly turned out of my hammock, where I lay with my clothes on, by Nolo Kerdrec, the quarter-master, my patron and friend, crying:

"Make haste on deck, lad, there's something to see."

In a second I was up, mounted on a bucket, straining my eyes to larboard.

"Take off your cap," said Nolo, who, with two or three of the seamen stood bareheaded beside me.

"What you see yonder," he went on, "is the bar of Saltes, with Palos in the rear."

"Palos, Palos, I'm quite ready to believe you, but to tell the truth I see nothing;" whereupon the quarter-master handed me a glass.

"Ah! now," said I, "I see a narrow strip of reddish coast, which I took at first for a cloud."

"Is that all?"

"Yes."

"Well, I have neither your telescope nor your good eyes, and yet I see three ships sailing in company, not ships such as we build now-a-days; you see them now surely?"

"No, master, upon my word I don't, and what's more, I don't believe you do either."

"I tell you, boy, I see their names even, though I can neither read nor write. The two smaller ones are the *Niña* and the *Pinta;* the other, the biggest and the most unwieldy, the one that carries the admiral's flag, the flag with a great crucifix in the centre, is the *Santa Maria,* a Spanish caravel of the good old times. On the poop stands the captain, a fine man with large eyes, the colour of the sky, eyes that look straight before them. That man, the greatest that ever lived, is the discoverer of the New World starting on his first voyage—"

"Christopher Columbus!" I exclaimed, letting fall the glass.

"Ah! now you see him, do you?"

"As there is a God above, master, I do."

"That's all right," said Nolo. And, noticing my eyes glistening with emotion and admiration, "the best glass, my boy, is the one that sees the farthest."

A few hours later we were leaving the mouth of the Guadalquivir on our left, and sailing past the little harbour of Rota, thanks to a friendly

breeze from the north-west, we cast anchor that same evening in the Cadiz roads.

There, amidst all the delights of a first visit to Spain! to Andalusia! I forgot Columbus, forgot Nolo, very nearly even one day forgot my ship *La Truite;* but no sooner was I afloat again than the vision returned with its former vividness, and Christopher Columbus stood before me in all his greatness, though, to my shame be it said, I knew little about him save his name and his deed of fame.

Nolo Kerdrec readily took upon himself to teach me more. In one sense, indeed, he may be said, to use a somewhat common expression, to have taught me more than he knew: the legendary spirit of the middle ages revived in this worthy Breton sailor; and, with the utmost good faith, he bit by bit put down to his hero's account all that he thought worthy of him in the wonderful stories he had collected in the course of his many voyages.

When in later days I set myself to supply, as I best could, the defects of my education, I stumbled again and again, in the mythology, in the lives of the saints and of the great navigators—Sindbad, the Columbus of the *Arabian Nights* included,—upon deeds of courage, feats of nautical skill, profound as well as shrewd sayings, miracles even, which, in the long night watches in the forecastle of *La Truite,* I had learned from Nolo to associate with the name, but which I was obliged with reluctance to erase from the life, of Christopher Columbus. This disappointment was not, however, of long duration; for just as our hero who set out in quest of imaginary lands discovered real ones, losing nothing by the exchange, so the Columbus I met with in history lost nothing from comparison with the visionary Columbus of the legend. Far from disappearing in the light of science, the heroic figure I first beheld off the red sands of Palos wore the same noble

countenance and the same gigantic proportions, nor were the stories of Nolo in any way out of keeping with the real character of his hero.

But we are not merely concerned in the present work with the history of the man, but with that of the discovery of America likewise; and here again we find the legend of the Breton sailor, fabulous as it is in the letter, confirmed, or all but so, in the spirit by the researches of our own time.

It has been the province of the latter to demonstrate how almost all the great events in history, famous as they may justly have made the names of certain individuals, have always, more or less, been the product of the age in which they occurred. The responsibility of the chief actors in revolutions that have changed the face of the whole world is not therefore necessarily destroyed, but lessened only—to what extent history, better informed now than of old, has to determine.

Looked at from the new point of view many historical personages, no doubt, lose their prestige, whilst others, and not always the most deserving, are the gainers, but none so much as Christopher Columbus. The reason being that the discovery of the New World is, perhaps, the one of the few equally important facts recorded in history most inseparably connected with the name of one individual.

A Castilla y à Leòn,
Nuevo mundo diò Colon.[1]

The lion's share of the glory awarded him by his contemporaries has been

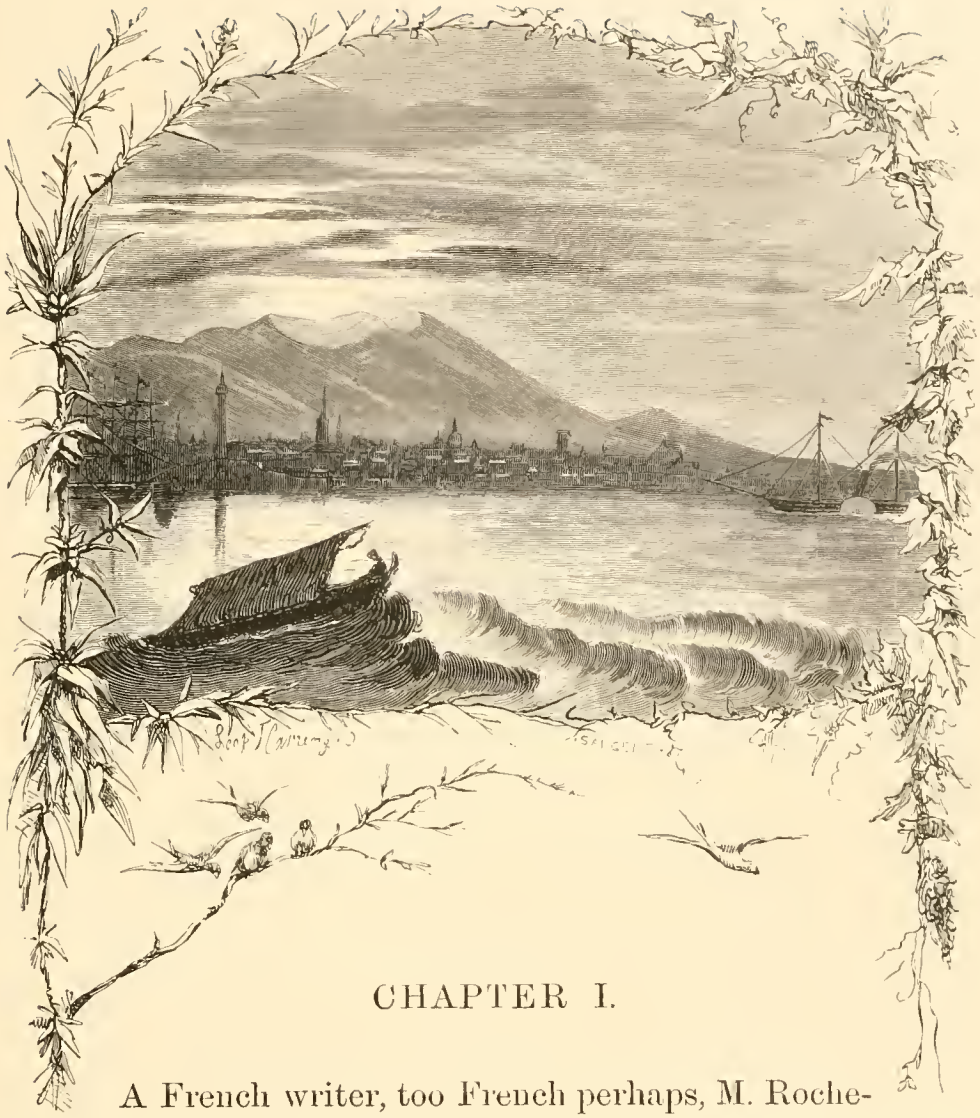
[1] To Castile and to Leòn,
Columbus gave a new world

is the famous distich inscribed by Ferdinand the Catholic on the first tomb of Columbus, in the cathedral of Seville. Queen Isabella gave more formal expression to the same idea in her letter of the 5th of September, 1493, to the illustrious admiral, where she says, "What causes us the greatest joy in this whole affair is that it was conceived, begun, and achieved by you alone, by your industry and your labours."

confirmed to him by posterity, nor has modern research, so fatal to usurped honour, succeeded in robbing him of the same.

The history of Columbus' life and of the discovery of the New World are more inseparably connected now than ever, therefore together they form the subject and the title of the present work.

HIS ORIGIN AND EARLY LIFE



CHAPTER I.

A French writer, too French perhaps, M. Rochefort Labouisse, has taken great pains to discover and prove that Christopher Columbus' family[1] was of French origin. The feeling that prompted his researches is too patriotic for me to wish to prove him mistaken, nay, I even go so far as

[1] See notes at the end of the book.

to say that his statements appeared to me at least plausible; at the same time I am obliged to own that no writer of any authority agrees with him.

Certain it is, however, that the family had been long settled in the Genoese state when our hero, Christopher Columbus, the son of Domenico Colombo, a silk weaver, and Susanna Fontanarossa, his wife, was born. He was the eldest of five children, having three brothers, Bartholomew and Giacomo, whom we shall presently see figuring with distinction in this history, and Giovanni Pellegrino, who died young, and one sister, of whom nothing is known excepting that she was married to a pork-butcher called Giacomo Bavarello.

The time and place of the birth of Columbus have been the subject of long and learned discussion; with regard to the former this uncertainty is hardly surprising, but there seems no reason why, in the face of Columbus' own will,—a document as authentic as it is sublime, which formally and emphatically states that he was born in Genoa of Genoese parents—his birthplace should ever have been a matter of dispute. In spite of his own simple assertion, numberless towns and villages, both in the Montferrat and the Plaisantin, as well as on the Genoese rivieras,[2] to this day contend for the honour of having given him birth. Gogoleto, or Cogoreto, a village not far from Genoa, points with pride to the hut where, according to the most popular tradition of all, he is said to have first seen the light, but the best authors have ended as they should have begun by agreeing with Columbus himself that he was born in the town of Genoa about the

year 1436. The family of Columbus were at that time neither as poor nor in such humble circumstances as might be inferred from some of the foregoing details. Although through reverses they had sunk in the social scale, many proofs exist that they belonged to a younger branch of a noble family.[3] It is also well known that in the Italian republics, communities that consisted of warriors and traders, no shadow of reproach rested on any employment, industrial or manual, provided it were honestly and skilfully exercised. As in Florence a man of gentle birth might be a silk weaver without in the least degree lowering himself, so a cloth weaver (*textor pannorum*) of Genoa could hang out his coat-of-arms as a sign over his shop-door without creating remark.

Having once touched on this subject it is as well to record that even at a period of his life, when his name had become so famous as to confer rather than receive distinction, Columbus attached a certain degree of importance to his descent. Alluding to Colon el Mozo, supposed to be a relation of his, he wrote to the nurse of the Infant Don Juan, "Let them call me by what name they like, the fact remains that I am not the first admiral in my family. The wise king, David, was a keeper of sheep, and afterwards became king of Jerusalem. I serve the same God who exalted David."

We shall presently see that Fernando, who wrote the life of his illustrious father, is less positive on this point: enough for him that he was the first admiral in the world; and, whilst acknowledging that his relationship to el Mozo was not authentically proved, he adds, "I am of opinion that it is better our family should date its glory from the admiral

than look beyond to ascertain whether the admiral's father was a shopkeeper."

However this may be, the latter owned two houses in Genoa, the site of which is well known, and in one of those houses there is every reason to believe Christopher Columbus was born; he likewise possessed a little freehold in the valley of Nura, and some pieces of ground in the neighbourhood of Quinto.

His position was, therefore, such as to enable him to give his sons a good education, without which the eldest would doubtless never have conceived the idea of his immortal enterprise, and which enabled the two younger, as we shall see, materially to assist in the same.

For our reader's satisfaction we may here add, that the good man lived long enough to see the fruits of his care, fruits a thousand times more glorious than any he could have anticipated, but which, notwithstanding, it would be unjust not in part to ascribe to his enlightened, we might say all but inspired prevision of his son's future. We are not, however, to suppose that the education Columbus received went much beyond the rudiments of letters and science; but owing to the variety of subjects it embraced, it prepared the way for every vocation, and especially that for which he was destined. In his native town, besides reading, writing, and arithmetic, he learned drawing and painting, subsequently turned to good account in making geographical charts. At the University of Pavia, whither he was sent at nine years of age, he learned the Latin tongue—one of the keys to other studies,—natural philosophy, that is to say, the physics of Aristotle, and all that

was then known of astronomy, or, as it was then called, astrology, and navigation.

It is evident that geometry was among the studies of which he gained some knowledge, but it does not appear that he gave to the study of mathematics that attention which its importance demands. His imagination, from the outset the most powerful and active of all his faculties, was no doubt allied, as in most of his fellow-countrymen, with strong practical sense; but that it held at first the decided sway is proved by his so early abandoning his studies for the adventurous life of a sailor.

That noble profession, the desire for which is in most cases of spontaneous growth, and often asserts itself most imperiously where everything is most calculated to repress it, had an irresistible attraction for a youth born and bred in a picturesque and important maritime city, such as Genoa was in the middle of the fifteenth century.

Even now, of all the many seaport towns in Italy, Genoa viewed from the sea is perhaps the one that makes the strongest and most lasting impression on the traveller. At the head of one of the most beautiful gulfs in the world, extending almost to the summit of a gently sloping amphitheatre of hills, whose clearly defined outlines are tinged with lovely and ever-varying hues of the softest colours—reaching from a sea of magic blue to a still more exquisite sky, Genoa presents a picture of unrivalled beauty and loveliness. Once seen emerging from her forest of masts, with her painted houses, her hanging gardens and springing fountains, her light domes and fantastic towers, her marble palaces and terraces rising

tier above tier, decorated with statues and vases of flowers, Genoa is never forgotten.

Many of these wonders of art, an art more decorative than true, did not exist in the days of Columbus' childhood; but even then the situation of the town, the magnificent and warlike aspect of her palaces, her marble buildings, her splendid churches, the wealth and glory she derived from her maritime expeditions, warlike and commercial, and lastly, the manners and customs of her inhabitants, had earned for her the name of Genoa "la Superba."

Proud of the active part she had taken in the Crusades, vying with Venice, whom, though unable to conquer in arms, she had with greater success competed with for supremacy in the trade with India, she had long ago crushed her rival Pisa; and many and many a time before he went to Pavia the young Columbus, and the other youths of Genoa, must have passed beneath the gates of the ancient and celebrated bank of St. George, where the chains of the harbour of Pisa, destroyed by a Genoese fleet, still hang.

Before that same edifice of St. George we picture him as a child gazing with admiration at the Genoese griffin, with the imperial eagle of Frederick and the Pisan fox in its claw, and spelling out the inscription beneath, to which France had not yet, as she was preparing to do, given the lie.

Griphus ut has angit,
Sic hostes Genua frangit.[4]

The day was approaching when this same Republic of Genoa, abusing the liberty she had in turn attained, lost, and regained,

was to become a fief of the French crown in the hands of the traitor Ludovico il More. But the divisions and the fruitless disturbances which were one day to cause her to reject with incredulity or indifference Columbus' offer of a new world, could not have shown their fatal side to him in his boyhood. Perhaps even for an adventurous mind they formed an agreeable contrast to the calm of a university town, that had already found refuge in slavery from political storms.

But what must have produced the deepest impression on the youth born and brought up in Genoa was the bustle and activity of that maritime life—which he was destined to transfer from his native to his adopted country—and the glory her naval victories and trading expeditions, which then went hand in hand, shed on such names as the Doria, the Fiesco, the Balbi, the Brignoli, the Grimaldi, the Durazzo.

In addition to the other tales of naval daring, the memory of which can never perish, wonderful stories were told in the Darse, and on the Molo-Vecchio, of the stratagems, skilful manœuvres, and daring deeds of a certain Columbo, captain of the naval forces of Louis XI., and surnamed the "arch-pirate." Another Columbo, distinguished from the former by the surname of Mozo (the younger), had also won renown as a hardy sea-captain. He commanded a little squadron armed at his own cost, and sailed under the Genoese flag beyond the Straits of Gibraltar, now against the Barbarians, now against the Venetians, Genoa's rivals in trade. By these expeditions he was supposed to have amassed great wealth.

Tales and traditions such as these, kept alive in his memory

by letters from home, must have possessed an irresistible fascination for him, compared to the tame history, the quiet studious life of an inland town like Pavia, and were no doubt a frequent and serious source of distraction to the young scholar. And no sooner had he acquired the rudiments of nautical astronomy than he was filled with a burning desire, after having obtained his father's consent, of putting his knowledge to some kind of practical test.

At the age of twelve he returned to Genoa, and worked for two years with his brother Bartholomew at his father's trade, whose prospects had meanwhile not improved. At this time he encountered some opposition from both to the projects which he entertained, but, at last, his enthusiasm prevailed with both.

It is not unlikely, though there is no evidence to prove it, that the fame of the two navigators alluded to above, who bore the name of Columbo,—possibly even the coming of one of them to Genoa,—may have had something to do with Columbus' choice of the sea as a profession. It is certain that Christopher, who went to sea in his fourteenth year, made his first voyages under the orders of Columbo the elder—a proof that the relationship their descendants were one day so stoutly to maintain really did exist.

The illustrious admiral little thought when he took the young Christopher under his charge that he was to be indebted to him for the honour of being handed down to posterity.

What expeditions they made together we do not precisely know, nor the dates of his voyages in the Mediterranean, on one of which he is known to have received a wound

of such a serious nature as to have still been felt in his old age. He alludes to it in a letter dated 7th July, 1503.

On his own authority, also, we know that he was in command of several Genoese galleys off the island of Cyprus in a war against the Venetians.

Mention is made in another letter of a voyage to Chios in terms that convey a high idea of his powers of observation; and there is another story in which that side of his character is manifested, which gained for him the name of the Christian Ulysses.

When Columbus first assumed command himself it was in the service of King René of Anjou, about the year 1460, when the Genoese were trying to wrest the crown of Naples from the house of Aragon for John of Calabria, their ally. "It happened to me," Columbus writes, "that I was sent to Tunis by King Reinier (whom God has taken to himself), to capture the galley *La Fernandina;* and when I arrived off the isle of San Pietro, in Sardinia, I learned that there were two ships and a carrack with the galley, by which intelligence my crew were so troubled that they determined to proceed no farther, but to return to Marseilles for another ship and more people. As I could by no means compel them, I assented apparently to their wishes, altering the point of the compass, and spreading all sail. It was then evening, and next morning we were within the Cape of Carthagena, while all were firmly of opinion that they were sailing toward Marseilles."

We do not know in what year Christopher Columbus first passed through the Straits of Gibraltar, but we have it on his

own authority that he had seen the north of Europe and England, and sailed several times from Lisbon to the coast of Guinea, before he made his first voyage of discovery.

In his Book of Prophecies (Profecias) he writes: "From my tenderest age I went to sea, and have been a navigator ever since until this day. He who gives himself up to the practice of this art wishes to know the secrets of nature here below. During more than forty years they have been my study. Every sea that has been sailed on until now, I have sailed on likewise."

The most important of these earlier voyages, as regards the area of water traversed, is the voyage to Iceland. We shall refer to it again in its proper place, merely observing here, that there was nothing in this northern expedition of a nature to lead him to the idea of the existence of a new world in the west.

Christopher Columbus' real glory lay less in the actual discovery, whose real nature and import he died without fully understanding, than in the character and strength of judgment which enabled him to achieve that discovery whilst dreaming of another. What justifies his being regarded as almost unique is, that he combined in his person all the qualities that go to make a great man; that he was at once in a high degree a man of heart, of action, and of understanding.

But this alone would not have sufficed to fit him for the great career for which he was destined, without the deep piety which was his safeguard against pride. That Columbus was from an early age fully aware of his genius we cannot doubt; he believed in it even before he had given any tangible proof

of it; believed in it in spite of all the rebuffs and delays, the cold answers, the cruel evasions he had to encounter; but if he was proud before men he was humble in the presence of God, whose envoy he considered himself to be. He believed his ideas came from a divine inspiration, and carried them out with a view to the glory of God. This self-reliance under trials, a proof of true heroism which shone equally in St. Louis and Joan of Arc, was the distinctive feature of his character, and, as if he feared people might one day seek to explain it away, he made his letters and writings bear witness to it again and again.

Like the shepherdess of Domrémy the son of the Genoese artisan had visions and prophetic dreams; like her he heard voices calling him to do great things; and as Joan of Arc, by the coronation of Charles VII. in his cathedral of Rheims, re-established the unity of France, so Christopher Columbus, by connecting the New World with the Old, re-established the unity of the human race.

That the idea of such an undertaking presented itself to him under the form of a religious mission, is proved not only by his writings, but by a number of contemporary testimonies as well.

Amongst the latter, one of the most curious from a picturesque point of view, is a sketch preserved in the Ducal Palace in Genoa, which, apart from the subject, is interesting, as it is generally supposed to be from Columbus' own hand, and gives proof of considerable skill in draughtsmanship. It is an allegorical picture of the departure of Columbus for the New World. The hero is represented riding in a chariot,

with paddle-wheels, on a stormy sea. Providence is seated beside him pointing out the way; Christian Religion propels the chariot forward, whilst Ignorance and Envy endeavour to hold it back. Each figure carries an explanatory inscription, and Columbus' mark or signature is affixed to the drawing. The Christian name is represented by a figure indicating its meaning—"The Christ-bearer."

This is the case likewise in the famous chart of the new continent, traced in the year 1500 by Juan de la Cosa of Biscay, who accompanied Christopher Columbus.

At the head of this valuable document Columbus' patron saint is figured, according to the legend, wading across a river with the child Jesus seated on his shoulder.

M. Ferdinand Denis, a learned writer to whom the history of Portugal, Spain, and the New World is largely indebted, is inclined to think that the artist geographer has given the saint the features of the great navigator. This supposition, not an unlikely one, greatly adds to the interest of the picture, the more so as no undoubtedly authentic portrait of Columbus is known to exist. The portraits we have are all so different, that, in trying to reconcile them, our artist has chiefly followed the indications furnished by Oviedo, Gomara, Las Casas, and more especially Fernando Columbus.

The first tells us that "Columbus was a man of fine figure, with large powerful limbs, a long face covered with freckles, and a fresh complexion inclining to red."

From the writings of the other two it also appears that the admiral was tall, well formed, robust, of commanding presence, with a long face neither full nor thin, somewhat

ruddy and freckled, and a high colour. That his nose was aquiline, his cheek-bones rather prominent, and his eyes, which were light gray, subject to inflammation.

"In his youth," Ferdinand Columbus goes on to say, "my father's hair was fair, but before he reached the age of thirty it was quite white."

To the foregoing details may be added, on trustworthy testimony, that his forehead was high, his under lip slightly protruding, and his chin dimpled.

His sight and hearing were quick, and his sense of smell extremely delicate, and he had a great fondness for perfumes. Even on his voyages, according to Oviedo's account,[5] worthy of being translated by a *valet de chambre,* he was fond of having his linen, which was very fine, and his gloves scented with essences or more often with dried flowers. Otherwise he was moderate and simple in apparel and diet from taste and on principle, and may be added to the list of great men who confined themselves as far as possible to a vegetable diet, and preferred water to wine. His taste for simple apparel, a taste but too often favoured by necessity, was accompanied by the most scrupulous care of both dress and person, even when he wore the garb of an associate of the order of St. Francis, as he did whenever circumstances permitted.

Hitherto even such precise information as this has failed to destroy the popular belief in certain pictures differing from it in every feature. Not one is looked upon as authentic now, save by those whose interest it is so to regard them as such. Only by going direct to the sources above referred to is it

possible to get a really correct picture of the person of Columbus.

With regard to his early days, all or nearly all has been said that can be relied on as fact, and our chief aim has been to confine ourselves to the information furnished by his own writings.

Unfortunately his notes, important as they are, have no sequence, nor are they detailed enough for it to be possible to weave them into a complete and conclusive history. Nor were they, it is certain, recorded with any such view. The gaps are many and the dates few. For instance, no allusion is made to a certain naval exploit too well verified and too interesting to be overlooked here.

According to Bossi the historian, Christopher Columbus was in command of one of the squadron of Columbo el Mozo, cruising off the Portuguese coasts, when, at break of day between Lisbon and Cape St. Vincent, four Venetian galleys came in sight, returning richly laden from Flanders. Columbus did not hesitate to attack them notwithstanding the inferiority of his force. A furious encounter took place and continued till nightfall; the fiery missiles thrown by the combatants set fire to the huge galley with which Columbus' ship was engaged, the vessels were fastened together by chains and grappling irons and could not be separated, so that the conflagration soon became general. To escape a more horrible death, both Genoese and Venetians threw themselves into the sea. Columbus, seizing an oar which was providentially floating within reach, being, moreover, an excellent swimmer, succeeded in gaining the shore, two leagues distant from the

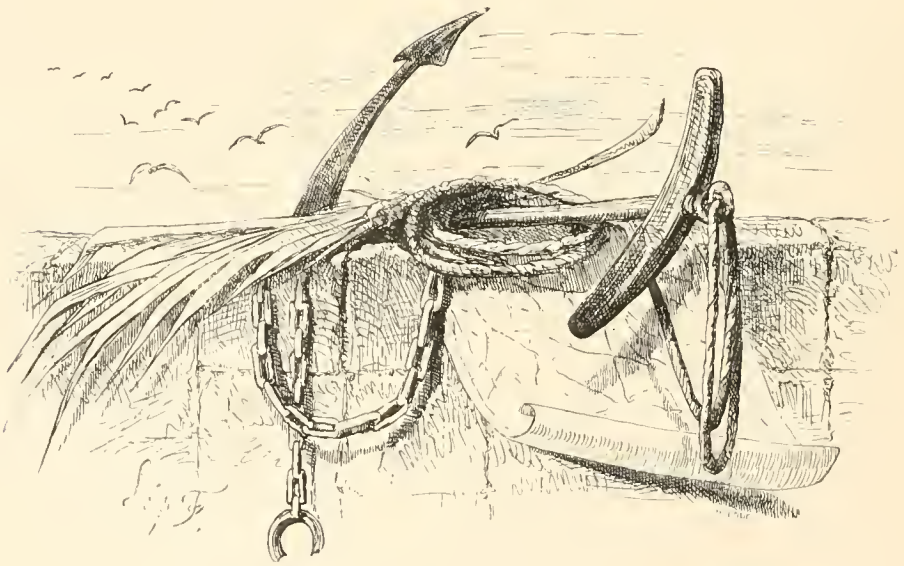
scene of action. After recovering from his exhaustion he proceeded to Lisbon, where he found his brother Bartholomew

and many of his Genoese countrymen. This adventure is supposed to have taken place in the year 1485, which was nearly a year after he had left Portugal. His arrival in

Lisbon is proved by authentic documents to have taken place in the year 1470.

From that year onwards, the thirty-fourth of his age, the shadowy traces of our hero, the vague and scattered anecdotes, interesting as giving glimpses of the checkered life he must have led, give place to more full and authentic records.

Henceforward it is impossible to separate Columbus from his "deed of name." Impatient though we were for the moment to arrive, it was advisable first to acquire some knowledge of the man and ascertain what the moral qualities were that constituted his real greatness. Tertullian has said that it is not the suffering but the cause that constitutes the martyr; by the discovery of the New World Columbus at the same time found the cause and glory of a martyr.



MARRIAGE AND LIFE AT LISBON

CHAPTER II.

In the year 1470, the date of the arrival of Columbus, Lisbon was the resort of Italians, merchants, seafaring men, adventurers, and artisans of every kind, many of whom permanently settled there. There were to be found repre-

sentatives of all the maritime nations of the old world, either taking an active part in the launching forth of some new expedition or playing the part of wondering lookers-on: along that entire coast a material and intellectual ferment was then going on, such as we can hardly form any idea of in these days. Thither this cosmopolitan multitude had hastened as if by common consent to wait like the Israelites on the shores of the Red Sea, for a new Moses to give the signal for a last and mysterious exodus. Columbus' place was there.

He was received by his countrymen with great favour. He found, as we have seen, his brother Bartholomew already settled there, and it is probable that their meeting was not entirely due to chance. Though no doubt the maritime activity of which Lisbon was at this epoch the great centre had chiefly attracted Christopher thither, it is likely that Bartholomew's presence had something to do with his determination to remain there for a time.

Other domestic ties of a closer nature were soon to attach him to the place.

Like his brother, a skilful pilot and a no less skilful draughtsman, Columbus, by his advice and probably under his direction, occupied himself in making maps and geographical charts, as also in transcribing and illuminating manuscripts; moreover, his special knowledge in that line enabled him to carry on a small trade in the originals and the copies. This interval between the two most active periods of his life furnished him with an opportunity of continuing his literary and scientific studies—studies we have

a programme of in one of his later writings. "The Lord," he says (in his Profecias), "endowed me richly with know-

ledge in everything relating to the sea. He gave me insight into the science of the heavenly bodies; as also into that of geometry and arithmetic; and granted me besides, the

requisite understanding and skill to draw the spheres, and put the towns, rivers, and mountains, in their proper places."

Lastly he adds, and the passage deserves special notice, "I have studied all manner of works: history, the chronicles, philosophy, and other arts for which the Lord hath given me understanding." He did not exaggerate; his reading for those times was very extensive, though wanting in order and method, a defect perceptible in his writings in a diffuseness of style, but a defect which a certain *naif* turn of expression, as also the profusion and wealth of the images employed, transform into a charm ever new.

The profuse quotations he makes, answer the purpose of a catalogue of the works he read. It is especially interesting to note the sources whence he derived support for his theory of the existence of lands in the West, revealed by tradition from the earliest historical ages.

In the book of Job he read of "a place hid from the eyes of all living, and kept close even from the fowls of the air—God alone understandeth the way thereof, He knoweth the place thereof."

Esdras, after saying that the ocean covered only a small portion of the face of the earth, under the influence of a truer inspiration prophetically adds, "Behold the days will come that there shall rise up a kingdom upon earth."

And Isaiah, whose prophecies were the constant subject of his study and meditation, appeared to Columbus in his dreams, and, pointing with his hand to the West, gave additional weight to a prophecy more authentic than that of Esdras, less vague than that of Job.

To these sacred authorities, the groundwork of a faith in his case antecedent to conviction, were added those of numerous profane writers, and of the poets in the first place.

Plato, who paid the poets such splendid tribute by banishing them from his absurd republic, and not on that account alone, do we rank him amongst their number—Plato discoursed to Columbus of that Atlantis in which the Genoese navigator already saw something more than the subject of a philosophical novel or the dream of an old man. To him the Atlantis of Plato, or rather of Solon, to whom the legend is said to have been related by the Egyptian priests, was a land once separated from ours by a convulsion of nature, one day to be united to it again by the genius of man.

Had, in fact, Seneca not said, in words more beautiful and inspired than any he ever wrote: "When Oceanus hath burst the chains with which he hath encircled the terrestrial orb, and that orb is accessible to all, then, oh future ages! Thetis will reveal to you a great new land, and Thulè will no more be the end of the world."

That New World, which Plutarch not long afterwards was to see reflected in the moon as in a looking-glass,[6] was the subject of poetical traditions long before Seneca's time, under the form of a great island west of the Pillars of Briareus or Hercules. There, according to the legend of Theopompus and others by whom it has been embellished, reigned perpetual spring. There dwelt a race of men of gigantic size—the Patagonians of the future—inhabited towns called le Combat or le Pieté, and gold (always gold) as well as precious stones abounded there. There, finally, Saturn slept in a vast cavern

surrounded by the genii who had been his servants when he reigned over gods and mortals. These genii held a sort of court with the prophetic dreams of the sleeping Chronos, which were the thoughts of Jupiter. Not one of these details could be disputed; a sage who had dwelt in the great country of the Meropians had revealed to Sylla all he had there learned of the genii who guarded the slumbers of Saturn.

To the songs of the muse, the nurse of Columbus' youth, science and philosophy daily added their more positive teaching, now in Aristotle's words, now in Strabo's, now in those of Diodorus Siculus, and others, who in like manner watched the slumbers of Chronos, and recorded his oracles.

The first and greatest of them all had said, or rather was made to say:[7] "All these facts prove, not only that the earth is round, but that its circumference is not large. . . . The same relation the islands known to us bear to the seas that surround them subsists between our continent and the Atlantic. . . . In the sea, lying beyond the Pillars of Hercules, the Carthaginians are said to have discovered a desert island covered with forests and watered by navigable rivers."

Strabo, commenting on the opinion of Eratosthenes, wrote: "The temperate zone describes a complete circle, so that if the extent of the Atlantic Ocean were not an obstacle, we might journey by sea from Iberia (Spain) to the Indies, by navigating on the same parallel."

To navigate from Spain to India, this was the problem, which it was Columbus' purpose to solve,—a problem again and again recurred to by writers of old in terms more or less explicit. As for the extent of sea which was such a terror

to Strabo, Aristotle, or rather his school, had notably lessened it, and their views on the subject had become so general that, at a comparatively recent period, Seneca wrote: "When man, impelled by an insatiable curiosity, searches out the pathway of the stars, and that region of the heavens in which Saturn describes a revolution of thirty years, the contemplation of these things teaches him to despise the narrow limits of this globe of ours. For what is the distance from the utmost shores of Spain to the far Indies? A few days' voyage with a favouring wind."

We quote but a small part of the evidence to which, in agreement with the spirit of his age, Columbus must have attached paramount importance. Great as his learning was for the time at which he lived, he owed his convictions for the most part, if not directly to Bacon, Averroës, and Martyr d'Anghierra, yet certainly to Nicolo di Lira, and above all to the ingenious compiler Pierre d'Ailly, to whom he most frequently refers with a naïvete worthy of his great mind.

Two others whom he has not quoted, as far as I know, cannot have failed indirectly to exercise a great influence over him. One is the travelling merchant De Conti, the other the renowned Marco Polo, surnamed Messer Milione, from the heaps of gold and precious stones that dazzle the reader in the stories of his travels to great Cathay (China), Cipangu (Ceylon), and other countries of furthest Asia.

Those stories which were a compilation of real facts and unheard-of exaggerations according to whether the author was relating his own experience or what he had gathered from hearsay, Columbus very likely dispensed with reading; they

were incorporated into every memoir, and formed part of every conversation; if he did not believe in the towns of solid gold with their twelve thousand bridges (Conti reduced them to ten), he may at any rate have concluded from the riches brought back by the narrator that this wondrous Cathay was rich enough to defray the expenses of a ninth and last crusade, and to discover the shortest route from Europe to India, and devote the fruits of that discovery to the deliverance of the Holy Sepulchre, was the sum of the poor Genoese pilot's ambition.

Whilst, with an ardour and prudence we shall so often have occasion to admire, he was still planning the outline of this great design, and was, as he afterwards wrote, "in constant relation with men of letters, ecclesiastics and laymen, Latins, Greeks, Jews, and Moors," a circumstance which, considering his humble position, he could not have foreseen, brought about an important and happy change in his private life, besides affording new facilities for study and practical observation.

At the time of his arrival in Portugal the little Italian colony established there under the protection of Don Henrique had sustained a serious loss in the person of one of the greatest seamen in the service of the Infant, Barthelemy Mognis de Perestrello, who had just died, having been ruined by the reward conferred on him for his long services. He had been appointed governor of Porto-Santo, one of the Madeiras, and empowered to colonize the island, where great possessions were assigned him, but the needful capital failed, and by an occurrence as strange as it was disastrous entailed ruin upon himself and upon the infant colony. Some rabbits brought to the island by the first colonists multiplied so rapidly that before

long it was completely overrun by them, its natural productions destroyed, and all attempts at cultivation rendered useless.

One can imagine what the position of the governor's widow must have been after these sad events, when a suitor as poor as herself, but no less noble and disinterested, asked the hand of one of her three daughters in marriage.

Christopher Columbus loved Doña Felippa de Perestrello, and had succeeded in winning her regard, so that he obtained her hand without difficulty.

What did they bring each other? On the one hand, a share in rights bespattered with ridicule, in possessions of great extent, situated in an uninhabited and uninhabitable island; on the other, a new world—yet to be discovered—a dream, and no doubt already the reputation of a dreamer.

They lived at first under the same roof with Madam Perestrello, and Columbus contributed to the common needs of the household by continuing his former occupations of making charts and illuminating manuscripts; but his new connections soon drew on him the attention of influential personages, and also of the king, whom he entertained with stories of his voyages, and most likely too with his hopes and projects for the future, and we are told that the prince in his turn showed him one day some reeds as large as those that grow in India which had been picked up on the coast of the Azores.

Columbus heard also that great pines unlike those of the Old World, and pieces of wood curiously and delicately carved, different from anything ever seen in Europe, had been found at different times on those same shores as well as on the shores

of the Madeiras, driven thither by the wind. And lastly, that two bodies had been picked up on the beach of the Island of Flowers, which had nothing in common, in form or feature, with the type of any known race of men, all tending to confirm the settled convictions Columbus already entertained, convictions derived in part from Don Pedro Correa, a bold and clever seaman who had married Doña Felippa's younger sister, and inherited from his father-in-law the government of Porto-Santo.

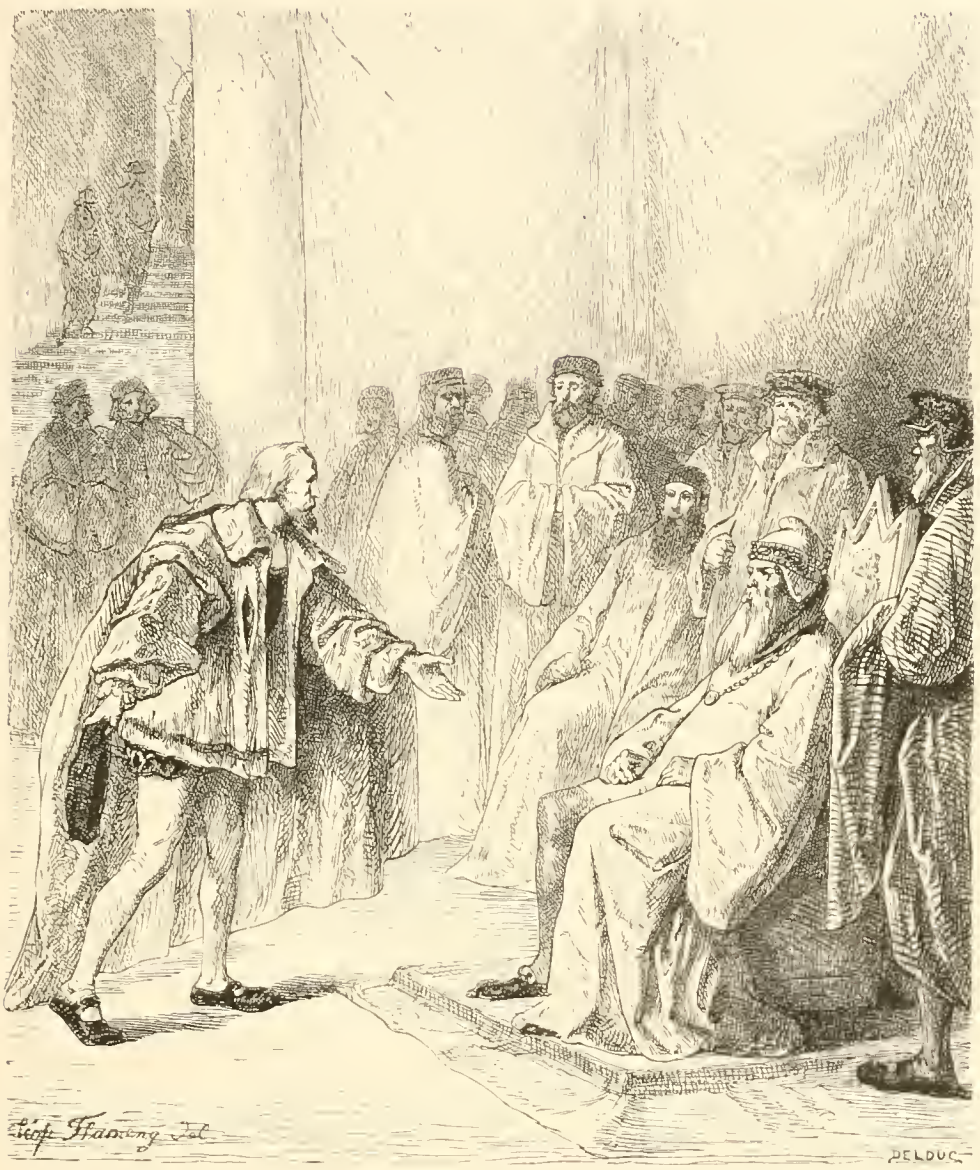
Columbus and his wife had accompanied the new governor to the island, whither their common interests called them, and there their son, to whom they gave the Spanish name of Diego, was born.

Finding, however, that the hopes which had attracted him to Porto Santo were not realized, he betook himself again to a seafaring life, and visited the coast of Guinea, the mouth of the Gold River, and was roused to enthusiasm at the sight of the discoveries of the Portuguese in those regions. Amongst the notes and charts of his father-in-law, Don Barthélemy de Perestrello, who had taken a large part in these discoveries, Columbus had found documents relating to them which must have greatly added to his nautical and geographical knowledge.

In 1473 we find him at Savona, helping his aged father out of some pecuniary embarrassments which had necessitated his leaving the town of Genoa.

In 1474, a memorable date in his history, as being that in which his ideas attained their full maturity, a last remnant of modesty made him submit them to the famous Toscanelli, one of the greatest authorities in geographical science, and he had the satisfaction of finding that between him and this

illustrious savant there existed a perfect accordance of hope and belief.



Finally, in 1476, full of one idea and one purpose, and having decided upon a plan which was to undergo no further modification, Christopher Columbus went first to Genoa and

thence to Venice, and made each of those states in turn a formal offer of himself and his idea. Prejudice, pride, and the proverbial economy of republican governments, were the cause of his offer being rejected, whereupon, after one more visit to his father at Savona, without paying any heed to the adventurers who might take advantage of his disclosures, he committed his project to the care of God and went to sea.

The sea was as a mother to Columbus, and comforted him in every trouble;—was he not like her with his blue eyes, his sudden impetuosity, and equally sudden calm? And Columbus was a good son! What does a mother demand of her children but that they should come back to her when the world has wounded them? Then, whatever their growth or age, she welcomes them home, scolds them tenderly, cradles them in her bosom and folds them in her arms, as in the days of their infancy.

Columbus knew the value of that refuge for the sorrow-stricken; he never failed to resort to it in his times of trial, and to find that he never rested on that bosom for an hour before he awoke soothed and pacified.

Behold him in Iceland—whither he had fled—a few months after the failure of his hopes; his own words, written at that time, show how perfect the calm was that had succeeded the former agitation, and how quickly all bitterness against those by whom he had been repulsed had passed away from his mind.

"In the year 1477, in the month of February, I was cruising more than a hundred leagues beyond Tillé (Thulè), the southern limit of which is distant 73 degrees from the equator, not 63 as some geographers say, and Tillé does not lie within the line

that bounds Ptolemy's west. English ships from Bristol chiefly carry their merchandise to this island, which is as big as England. When I was there the sea was not frozen, although the tides there are so strong that they rise and fall 26 fathoms (*brasses*). The Tillé Ptolemy speaks of lies where he said, and is now called Friesland."

In spite of the mistakes as to distance and latitude, which a child in these days can detect, this passage testifies to its author's remarkable sagacity. He was the first man of modern times to discover the existence of the two islands of Thulè, the smaller and more southerly of which, called Finland, is the Ultima Thulè of Ptolemy and Seneca. It would seem as if, as Humboldt says, Columbus had *divined* that which researches into ancient geography have rendered more and more probable in modern times. Nor does the same scholar, in his examination of the passage quoted, admit the possibility of Columbus' having received, when in Iceland, such information as might have awakened in him the idea of the great enterprise he was afterwards to carry out. "He might," says Humboldt, "have known that the Scandinavian colonists of Greenland had discovered Vinland, and that fishermen from Friesland had landed in a country called Drogeo, without seeing any connection between these facts and his projects." The celebrated geographer, Adam de Brême, had no doubt recognized the existence of Vinland in the tenth century, and the first discovery of continental America was later ascribed by Ortelius to Normans of the ninth century; but the works of these authors did not appear, the former until long after the death of Columbus, and the latter only ten years before.

We may add that, had he heard these facts, as Humboldt says, on the very spot, they would inevitably have altered his plans; whereas, we see him on his return from Iceland laying the same plans he had submitted to Toscanelli in 1474, before King John and his council. His overtures met with a better reception from the intelligent successor of Alphonse V. than from the Senates of Genoa and Venice; he was at once called upon to fix the price he intended to set on the successful execution of his design. Columbus measured his claims by the greatness of the enterprise, and to the king they appeared exorbitant, especially when compared with the obscurity and poverty of the claimant. Columbus would listen to no representations, and as the king and he could not come to terms, he returned once more to his humbler vocations with a calm steadfastness which increased the king's esteem and confidence.

And very soon, in spite of the contemptuous opposition of his most familiar associates, the king laid the matter before a higher council. After hot debate, which proved his views had met with some acceptance, Columbus was requested to draw up a full and detailed statement of his proposals for investigation. He obeyed without mistrust, and patiently awaited the result. The examination of his statement, to which he was not admitted, lasted a long time. From what transpired Columbus augured favourably of the result, when his misgivings were aroused by a rumour that began to circulate in Lisbon, which, if true, would put an end to all further treaty with the king and his council.

Some sailors, who had lately returned in a miserable plight from some mysterious expedition, no one seemed exactly to

know whither, were, he heard, going about the town making game of him and his ideas. Publicly and privately when in their cups they were boasting that they had tested the famous project of the Genoese pilot, and paid dearly for their chief's confidence in the worthless adventurer.

And what these swaggerers said was more than half true; for the fact was that their captain, a seaman of some note, had been provided with a copy of Columbus' plans, charts, and notes, and, though ostensibly bound for Cape Verd, intended, if fortune so favoured the enterprise, to rob the too-confiding Genoese of that for which a king was willing to be indebted to him though not to pay him.

But if it was easy to steal Columbus' idea, to steal his courage and genius was not so easy, and the one without the other proved of little avail. The courage of the crew waxed faint before they had sailed west many days. Dread of the unknown made their course unsteady, and to their affrighted minds every puff of wind that blew in their favour seemed to be hurrying them on to their destruction. The wind suddenly changed, and they blessed the storm that drove them from their course. At last the sea in disgust hurled them back to the shores whence they had come, to the feet of her future lord, who saw them disembark, pale and trembling, though already, like true cowards, with words of mockery on their lips.

Columbus regarded them with contempt, and in his heart at once renounced all connection with his betrayers.

According to these men and their faint-hearted captain, no one could hope to succeed where they had failed. Those who

heard them were only too ready to believe them. The ocean was proved more than ever impassable, and none but madmen, it was said, would be found to assert the contrary.

Nevertheless the king did assert the contrary, and Columbus continued to affirm it, but made no second offer to put it to the proof. And thus Portugal, by the bad faith of one of the wisest and most enlightened, though least noble-minded of her kings, lost the opportunity she had held for a while in her grasp, of gaining a world.

In vain this prince acknowledged his error, laying the chief blame of what had occurred on his councillors; in vain he endeavoured to atone for it by promising Columbus all he had asked. Columbus was immovable, and returned once more to his work and to his beloved studies, till, fearing from reports he heard that he was about to be forcibly compelled to conduct the undertaking he had once volunteered to carry out, he suddenly, towards the close of the year 1484, left Lisbon, taking his young son Diego with him.

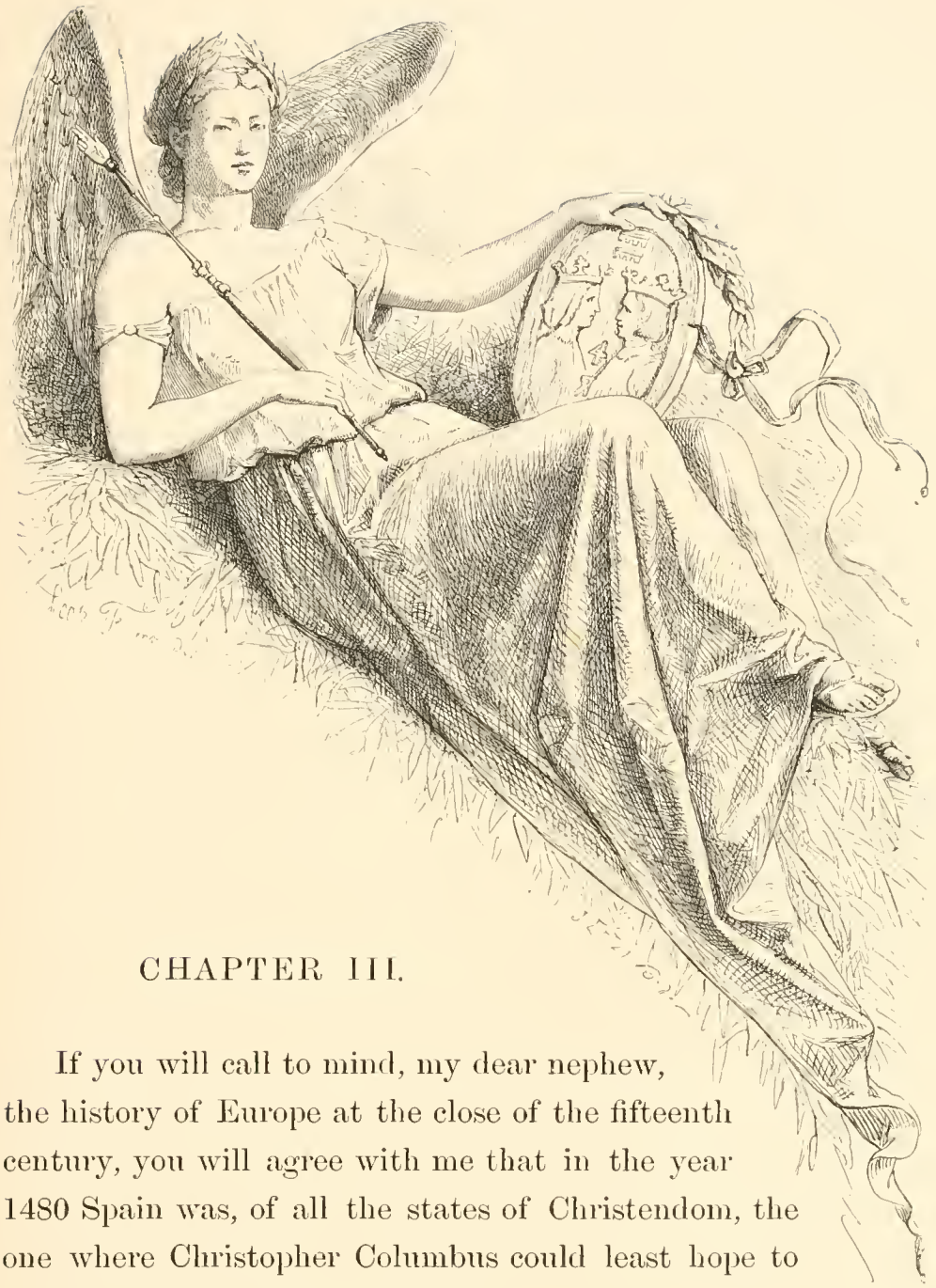
His wife, who had with unflinching courage supported him in all his trials, had lately died, and grief for her loss drove him to seek consolation in the bosom of his family and in his native air. He had the gratification of being able to bring his aged father back to his home in the Via d'Arca, and establishing him there in comparative ease. This done, stirred as it seemed by some sudden impulse, he left Genoa, where his proposals had met with as little official success as elsewhere; and freed from all obligations to a country that had, as it were, disowned him, he proceeded with his boy direct to Spain.

As birds of passage, after wheeling round and round in

apparent indecision over one spot, are seen suddenly to take flight in one direction, so Columbus, after long waiting, now makes for his goal.

HE GOES TO SPAIN


Léop. Flameng



CHAPTER III.

If you will call to mind, my dear nephew, the history of Europe at the close of the fifteenth century, you will agree with me that in the year 1480 Spain was, of all the states of Christendom, the one where Christopher Columbus could least hope to meet with a favourable reception.

And yet there Ferdinand of Aragon and Isabella of Castile were reigning in concert, and the religious side of the enterprise,

joined to the material advantages likely to accrue from it, seemed made to tempt two princes at that moment in pressing need of money. But the glory of wresting Spain, foot by foot and inch by inch, from the hands of the Moors and the Arabs, a glory already half theirs, far outshone all prospective glories such as these.

To purge their own land from a people no less infidel and more to be feared than the inhabitants of Cipangu and Cathay was their first duty,—the conquest and conversion of unknown, not to say visionary races of men the next. None of the forces of the nation, already reduced to extremities, could be diverted from an object so important, not even for a more immediate and more definite purpose, or for an enterprise entailing less cost and fewer hands than that of Columbus.

Considerations such as these can hardly have failed to present themselves to the mind of Columbus, when, by going to Spain, and, impoverished though she then was by the war, and absorbed in the painful effort to effect her own deliverance, asking her to give him what Genoa his own country, wealthy Venice, and adventurous Portugal, then in the full enjoyment of peace, had refused to give him, he seemed to be furnishing ample excuse for all to regard him as a madman.

The event showed him to be right; but the event proves little, and I am disposed in justification of the prudence of Columbus to believe, that if on this occasion again he acted contrary to the dictates of human wisdom, it was because he was guided by inspirations from above. And my opinion is not based on slight authority. I do not pretend, no one less, to be initiated into the secrets of genius, but at an early age

simplicity, the sister of genius, took me into her confidence, and, when history is silent I collect my thoughts, appeal to my memory, and . . . behold, now at this very moment, I am standing in the stern of *la Truite*, and hear my own boyish voice interrupting Nolo in his story:

"But after all, master, you have not yet told us why Columbus went to Spain, where there seemed to be nothing for him to do."

"Why?" replies Nolo, "why did Columbus go to Spain? can't you guess?"

"No, I cannot."

"And yet it is not so difficult to imagine why: because he thought he should find there what he had not found elsewhere; he scented the woman from afar."

We must forgive the expression, used as it was by Nolo in the best sense—on no account would I alter it—and we shall soon see that Christopher Columbus actually did find in that wonderful woman, Isabella the Catholic, that union of strength and grace, the mysterious *point d'appui* without which no human lever has ever yet been able to move the world.

Isabella ranks second only to the saints. She combined in her person the resolute qualities of man, with the softer virtues the charm and grace of woman. God had not only chosen, but predestined and prepared her for the two great acts she accomplished—the conquest of the Moors and the discovery of the New World.

King Ferdinand her husband's only merit, to give him his due, was that now and then he understood her, and did not always stand in her way. His people testified their

gratitude to him by letting him share the glory of the queen as he shared her power; and out of condescension towards

Isabella, who, though strongly attached to him, was at times compelled to oppose him, they bestowed on the royal pair the title posterity has not disavowed of the Two Kings.

The repression of the Portuguese invasion, the re-establishment of order in the finances of the country, the increase of the national wealth, the reform of the clergy and the convents, the promotion of letters and arts, are among the lesser works of this reign; and with regard to Ferdinand's share in them, we shall shortly be able to form an opinion when we see the share he took in the encouragements held out to Columbus.

Warlike, wise, and learned as she was, Isabella was none the less anxious to deserve the epitaph of the great Roman matrons—*Lanam fecit.* The linen her husband wore was all the work of her own hands.

Her modesty equalled her other virtues; at the council her chief desire always seemed to be to learn, and a resolution once made, she would express it in the most gracious and poetical form. One day when respectfully blamed for her too tardy measures with regard to the siege of Grenada, she plucked a *grenada* (pomegranate) that happened to be within her reach, and eating it slowly a seed at a time said, "It is thus seed by seed that the grenada should be eaten."

Isabella is above all panegyric, superlatives seem only to lessen her greatness, and yet to speak of her in cold and measured terms is hardly possible.

M. de Montalembert proclaims her "the noblest creature that ever reigned over men."

Amongst contemporary writers who were enthusiastic in their descriptions of her, Oviedo loses himself in the contemplation of "that great soul, that ocean of virtues." By others she has been compared to Saint Helena the mother of Constantine, to Saint Theresa, to Saint Elizabeth of Hungary. Peter

Martyr, writing to one of the most illustrious Romans of the Renaissance, says, "Look upon this that I am going to say to you, Pomponius, as a page of the Sybilline books; this woman is stronger than a strong man, superior to every human soul, a model of modesty and integrity."

Ferdinand's chaplain gives up the attempt to paint so many charms and so many virtues; "all the grace, the distinction, the dignity the king possesses we find," he says, "to a far higher degree in this queen, the happiness and the glory of Spain, the highest example of every virtue."

Finally, the Franciscan Cardinal Cisneros, the learned scholar and able minister, declares that the sun will never shine on her equal.

The latter had not only been summoned to Isabella's councils, he had also been admitted to her more immediate confidence. But before that, the queen had already found in the Franciscan community a guide and director, who was hereafter to exert a very leading influence over the most glorious act of her reign.

Juan Perez de Marchena was an obscure Franciscan monk, whose scientific attainments and sanctity were but just beginning to be known when Isabella called him to be her confessor. The subject obeyed, but the monk sighed, for a court life was less congenial to him than retirement and study; and soon, with the queen's consent, he returned to the quiet shade of his monastery, which was as much in harmony with his religious calling as it was favourable to his taste for meditation and study. Isabella, whose confidence in him remained unshaken, did not on that account give up seeking counsel from him; in

moments of difficulty, and from time to time, Juan Perez, the Father Guardian of Santa Maria la Rabida, where he had built

a kind of observatory, found himself called upon to interrupt his prayers and studies in order to answer the letters of the queen, and give her the advice she demanded of him.

No place could have been so favourable to astronomical observations as this convent, whose ruins—walls, I should rather say, restored in 1854 by the Duke of Montpensier—command to the south a vast expanse of sea, and to the north the immense plains bounded on the one side by the Guadalquivir, on the other by the Guadiana.

The monastery was as humble as the religious community that inhabited it; its whole wealth consisted in a garden, a few vines, some very large cypresses, spreading pines, and palm trees; of the latter one is still standing, almost the only one of the vegetable treasures of La Rabida that has escaped the destructive hand of man and the fury of the elements.

About half a league from the monastery lies the little seaport town of Palos de Moguer, hardly less deserted now than the monastery that overlooks it; but in 1485 it was a place of considerable activity and importance, the inhabitants of which were amongst the most adventurous navigators of Spain. Intercourse with this maritime community, and with his scientific friend Garcia Fernandez, the physician of Palos, had perhaps first turned the attention of Fra Juan de Marchena to geographical and nautical science, and scarcely another man in Spain was so well prepared by nature and study to appreciate the thoughts of Columbus.

One day when Garcia de Fernandez had been paying his customary visit to the convent, the Father Guardian, on accompanying him to the gate, found the porter in conversation with a stranger, who, with a young lad, had stopped at the gate of the convent to solicit some refreshment. Struck by the interesting and distinguished appearance of the strangers, and the

fond and anxious gaze the man fixed on the boy, evidently his son, Juan Perez, himself a father, the father of a poor community, and one who loved and honoured the poor and the destitute, began by pressing the man himself to partake of the refreshment the boy had received at the hands of the porter, and then, entering into conversation with him, learned the particulars of his story: that he was a Genoese, as his speech had already indicated; that his name was Christopher Columbus, and that, having conceived the project of going to India by the "Ocean Sea," he was come to lay his plan before the Two Kings, with the proposition that he would give them a share in the glory of an enterprise, the whole cost of which was to be borne by them.

Father Perez evinced no surprise at utterances which, owing to their naïvete, another might have taken for the ravings of a madman; he treated his project with deference, shared, he said, his convictions, and was fully persuaded that the sovereigns—the queen at least—would lend a favourable ear to his propositions; but, as the times were far from propitious, he entreated Columbus to accept the hospitality his convent was only too glad to offer him.

The offer so cordially made was no less gratefully accepted, to the joy of the young Diego, who, from that day, like his father, adopted the dress of the order, a dress Columbus had formerly so long worn from devotion, and, perhaps, also a little from economy.

At this stage, impatient as I am to show you the hero of this true story at the actual attainment of his goal, I cannot refrain from dwelling and making my young reader dwell for a

moment on this period of a life which knew no other repose. It does not appear that during the sojourn of nearly a year Columbus made at the Convent of La Rabida his indomitable spirit pined or fretted at the delays imposed upon him. He had his son with him; and in the quiet cloisters of La Rabida he was surrounded by kindred souls who believed in his genius, and appreciated his perseverance, his lion-hearted courage, and his piety; they shared and nursed his hopes, hopes which the worthy Juan Perez, whose zeal never cooled, did all in his power to realise by his influence with Isabella.

At last the opportunity seemed favourable: in the spring of 1476 the court arrived in Cordova, where it appeared likely the sovereigns would remain for a while and allow themselves a period of leisure. Thither Columbus repaired with a letter of recommendation to Fernando de Talavera, the queen's confessor; but his propositions did not even obtain a hearing, he was treated as an eccentric visionary, and saw the court leave Cordova without his having even succeeded in gaining audience of Isabella, in whom, however, his faith still remained unshaken.

Father Perez had had too little confidence in himself: he had not addressed his friend directly to the queen, and it is a question whether, even, for some time, his application reached her ears, as Talavera proved unfriendly to his cause.

Columbus was helpless, and had to fall back upon map-making for his support; but in spite of the humbleness of his position, his merit and claims to notice now showed themselves such as to gain for him fresh partisans and powerful friends every day. It was during this period of painful suspense that

he obtained the hand of a noble lady of Cordova, Doña Beatriz Enriquez, who became the mother of Don Fernando.

The opposition, recorded by Antonio de Herrera, according to the Academy of History a most trustworthy historian, which this marriage at first encountered from the kinsmen of the lady has no doubt been greatly exaggerated, seeing that a nephew of Doña Beatriz accompanied Columbus on his first voyage, when his greatness was still a disputed problem, and that a younger brother of hers was in command of one of the ships that sailed in the third expedition.

The pair were, as it turned out, destined to taste but few of the pleasures they had hoped for in their union. Columbus did not belong to himself, and if, for an instant, he had forgotten and suffered Doña Beatriz to forget his higher calling, she had occasion to remember it in the hours of parting, and nobly resigned herself to the exercise of the only virtue which could raise her to her husband's level, the virtue of self-denial. She gave herself up entirely to the education of their son Fernando and of the young Diego, Columbus' eldest born, who was placed under her care, and seeing her husband only at rare intervals, lived on quietly and usefully with the two boys at Cordova in the neighbourhood of her own family.

Less than a year after their union Columbus was again summoned to the court by the celebrated Gonzales de Mendoza, archbishop of Toledo, and grand cardinal of Spain, to whom he had been introduced by his Cordova friends. The prelate was tenacious in his religious scruples, and these made him look for a moment with suspicion on the theory of Columbus; but once their emptiness had been demonstrated to him, as it was

rather by the faith of Columbus than by his arguments, the obscure Genoese navigator, the foreign adventurer,—foreign, therein lay his greatest fault—the visionary, the heretic, was presented in solemn audience, presented to the Two Kings by the great cardinal, a personage of such importance as to have been styled "the Third King of Spain."

Of the three kings Columbus saw but one—Isabella.

At last his eyes beheld the wondrous being who was the glory, the honour, the salvation of Christendom! And she was all that his fancy had pictured, as fair as she was great; well-formed, of the middle size, dignified and graceful in her deportment, her features noble and refined; her hair auburn inclining to red, the tint so dear to painters of the Madonna, her eyes of a clear blue like Columbus' own, with a benign and earnest expression. Once their gaze had met, once those two souls had exchanged mutual recognition, the miracle was accomplished, the unity of the world was achieved.

But if henceforward the future was in Columbus' hands, the present was still for a while in the hands of men, in the claws of the devil, as the good Nolo expressed it, who always called things by their proper names. If our hero's arguments had, at their first conference, convinced the queen, and given the king cause to reflect, they had produced little effect on an assembly composed not so much of geographers as of statesmen and theologians. We are told that among the latter the Dominicans, to the everlasting glory of their order, alone gave him an attentive hearing, and recognized the plausibility and the orthodoxy of his statements.

The conferences relative to the propositions of Columbus

were held in the Dominican convent of St. Stephen, where he was lodged and entertained with great hospitality during the course of the examination. The king and queen testified their good-will to him in a marked manner, and his judges themselves, though combating his ideas, owned that it was difficult to resist the power of his eloquence.

Nor could they meet him with any but the most incoherent opinions and old world prejudices. "Is there any one so foolish," some asked, in the words of Lactantius, "as to believe that there are antipodes with their feet opposite to ours; people who walk with their heels upwards and their heads hanging down?" Others argued that even should a ship succeed in reaching in this way the extremity of India, she could never get back, for the rotundity of the globe would present a kind of mountain, up which it would be impossible for her to sail. Easier was it for Columbus to meet objections such as these than to win over judges who were secretly overruled by the considerations of times and seasons. The stir and bustle of public concerns, and the cares and expenses of the war, interrupted the consultations of the board, and this famous assembly, convened with such pains, separated without coming to any conclusion.

It is due to the sovereigns to say that Columbus had made a lasting impression upon them. He was regarded henceforth as an important person, and his importance increased in the course of the following years, during which he was found fighting in the Moorish war, giving proofs of the distinguished valour which accompanied his wisdom and his lofty aspirations.

It was during the memorable siege of Malaga, where he was

serving under their majesties' orders, that Columbus first saw the heroic Isabella, clad in a suit of glittering armour cap-a-pié, brandishing like an archangel the famous sword, still preserved in the royal arsenal at Madrid, on the blade of which is inlaid the name of *Antonius*, the celebrated sword-cutler, and on the hilt of which are inscribed, on the one side, the words, "*Je désire toujours l'honneur,*" and on the other, "*Maintenant je veille, paix avec moi.*"

Malaga surrendered in 1487, and Columbus, who all this time had been lodged and entertained at the expense of the sovereigns, and encouraged with the most flattering promises, followed the court to Saragossa, and thence to Valladolid. In the course of the following spring John of Portugal renewed his offers in a most flattering letter, wherein he showed himself in no frame of mind for disputing over the terms, declaring himself ready to accept in advance all the conditions his "dear and particular friend" had formerly made.

The year 1488 was then drawing to a close, and still the war dragged on. The two sovereigns continued, no doubt, to be favourably disposed to Columbus, but he felt that in the mind of his adversaries he had lost rather than gained by the very reason of the royal favour.

Under such circumstances the overtures of John of Portugal were calculated to prove seductive; but Columbus did not think proper to comply with the invitation of the monarch; perhaps he had made one of his unalterable resolves to have nothing more to do with a man who had once played him false, and replied to his invitation by a refusal formally and respectfully expressed.

It was not that he cherished any feeling of resentment against the King of Portugal, but henceforward Columbus rested all his hopes on Isabella.

Her pious enthusiasm alone seemed to ensure to him, not so much the means of execution, as the actual realization of the great end and object of his enterprise. The fact was, that now, more than ever, Columbus looked upon the discovery of a Western India as a means of accomplishing the deliverance of the Holy Land. If he did not yet foresee the whole material importance of his design, he gave it a far higher and vaster moral significance than any conqueror ever had dreamed of: to hem in Islamism between two fires was the vow he, in concert with Isabella, opposed to the threats of the Grand Sultan of Egypt. The queen, moreover, charged the two reverend Franciscan friars, the bearers of the said threats, to announce to the Sultan the surrender of Baza, which they had just been witness of, and the approaching capture of Grenada, which would shortly bring the holy campaign to an end.

Nevertheless the junta, again convened at Salamanca at the instance of Columbus, had ended by solemnly declaring that the proposed scheme was vain,—as impracticable materially as it was devoid of all scientific basis.

This verdict, one of the most absurd ever pronounced by a learned body, made no impression whatever upon the queen; nor did she cease to hold out hopes and assurances of patronage to Columbus, the sincerity of which could not be doubted, though the execution thereof must be deferred to the end of the war, that war which seemed as if it never would end.

And thus days, months, and years succeeded each other, years of anxious expectation, of fruitless struggles, and disappointed hopes. The weariness we experience as we read the history of those years, enables us to form some idea how great the constancy of purpose and loftiness of spirit of Columbus must have been.

Some diversion was to be found in the bustle and turmoil of the campaign, amidst scenes of peril and adventure, and fighting as a common soldier under the banner of the queen; he took a bitter delight in exposing a life, the miraculous preservation of which was a continual pledge to him of his glorious predestination, to all the dangers of war; but in the midst of the rejoicings which succeeded each victory, when the court was in a continual tumult of parade and pleasure and festivity, tournaments and triumphal processions succeeding each other, then it was that the patience of Columbus was subjected to a trial, from which he was at length resolved for the sake of his own dignity to escape.

The resolve once made we can readily imagine where he went to seek for consolation.

The Father Guardian was waiting for him, and welcomed him back with the kiss of peace to the quiet cloisters of La Rabida. Four years had elapsed since they parted, and the worthy friar was greatly moved when he saw Columbus once again standing in the convent porch soliciting shelter. With grief and remorse he listened to the sad tale of disappointments and indignities he had to unfold, for was it not he who had inspired Columbus with that confidence in the queen which the event had so little justified?

On that point Columbus hastened to reassure his friend. against Isabella in whom he had always trusted, and the

difficulties of whose position he could understand, he had no complaints to make. Less now than ever did he doubt the sincerity of her intentions and the truth of her promises, but, as it appeared to him, it would be long before circumstances could prove favourable to his cause; and seeing time and strength thus squandered away in fruitless solicitings and bitter

disappointments, he was disposed to break off all connexion with Spain, and turn his steps either to England, where through his brother Bartholomew he had formed some relations, or to France, from whose king, Charles VIII., he had received a letter of encouragement.

Father Perez had no hesitation in endeavouring to combat a design, which, in his firm belief in the genius of Columbus, he regarded as disastrous for his sovereigns as for his country. He argued that Charles VIII., though no doubt a very adventurous, brave prince, was very young, and, like all his fellow-countrymen, frivolous, and moreover, as the enemy of Italy, the enemy likewise of Columbus. In France he would have to encounter anew all the vexations and disappointments he had experienced in Spain; Columbus would certainly not want protectors, nor even guardian angels, amongst a nation that had produced a Joan of Arc, but then did not that nation suffer Joan of Arc to be burnt at the stake without raising an arm in her defence?

No such blot rested on the annals of the country where Isabella reigned. Nor was Father Perez the only one to plead this patriotic cause; the soil on which Columbus now stood was less barren than that of Salamanca. The words of the Father Guardian had fallen on good ground, and in the absence of Columbus had brought forth good fruit, in the shape of friends and advocates of the cause. Not only was the physician Juan Fernandez a firm believer, he was likewise ready to accompany him, as he eventually did on his first voyage. Columbus found a no less warm and useful friend in Martin Alonzo Pinzon, head of a family of wealthy and distinguished navigators of Palos,

who gave the plan his decided approbation, and offered to take a large share in the expenses of the expedition.

Such flattering encouragements and warm adherence could not fail to overcome the resentment, however just, with which Columbus had first returned to La Rabida, and induced him to delay his departure until such time as an answer to the epistle Father de Marchena at once despatched to the queen on the subject should have been received.

Favourably disposed as Isabella already was to Columbus' suit, her reply to the letter of Juan Perez was a request that he would himself immediately repair to the court. The royal message diffused great joy in the convent, and, having obtained Columbus' sanction to the step, the Father Guardian saddled his mule, and that very same day at midnight, without guide or companion, set out on his mission. He journeyed a hundred leagues through the recently conquered

countries of the Moors; and not without fatigue and difficulty, but safe and sound, reached the city of Santa Fé, where the sovereigns were superintending the close investment of Grenada.

Admitted without delay to the presence of Isabella, the stronghold he had come to besiege, the good monk was enabled to despatch a missive the very same day to Columbus, containing the words, "I came, I saw, God conquered."

The queen had, in fact, not only renewed to Juan Perez the assurances she had given to Columbus, but likewise desired that Columbus might be sent to her, and ordered that a sum of money should be transmitted to him to defray his travelling expenses, and furnish him with means to make a fitting appearance at court.

Columbus just arrived at Grenada in time to see the crescent eclipsed for ever by the cross, and the keys of the town given up to the sovereigns of Spain by Boabdil, the last of the Moorish kings.

This triumph of his faith filled Columbus with joy, and seemed to augur success to his enterprise; but he was once more doomed to disappointment, and the horizon he had seen opening before him as he drew near to Grenada turned out to be a mirage.

The Junta, again convened in haste to negotiate with him, did not, now that he was high in the favour of the queen, treat him as contemptuously as before, but, backed by the king's want of faith in his cause, indignantly rejected the conditions Columbus thought himself entitled to make, provided his enterprise should prove successful.

In spite of the favourable reception he had at first experienced, like the minister who, when at the summit of his power, still kept his shepherd's crook and humble garb by him, Columbus had kept his mule, and no sooner had he heard the final decision of the assembly than, rather than compromise his demands, he mounted, and without uttering a word of complaint, rode forth from Santa Fé in the direction of Cordova, determined to leave Spain for ever and proceed immediately to France. He had lost his faith in Isabella, though not in his cause.

He was wrong. Hardly had he ridden two leagues before an officer, sent after him in haste, overtook him at the bridge of Pinos; alighting and uncovering, he desired him, with every mark of respect, to return to Santa Fé in the name of the queen. At first, it is said, the fugitive could not be induced to retrace his steps; but as soon as he heard of the ardour expressed by the queen, and the positive promise she had given to accede to all his demands, he surrendered at discretion.

Soon we shall see him himself commemorating the honours and privileges conferred on him by the queen; for to Isabella, and to her alone, he owed the unreserved acceptance of the terms she had proposed and maintained before the Junta with so much dignity.

But to whom was he indebted for this sudden and decisive intervention of Isabella's? It need hardly be said to Juan Perez. No sooner had the worthy father learned the final result of the interview with the Junta than, without wasting time in fruitless remonstrances with Columbus, he sought an

immediate audience of the queen, and warmly supported by the faithful Alonzo de Quintanilla, and the eloquence of the beautiful Marchioness of Moya, whose name, in default of more particular mention, ought to be graven here in letters of gold, pleaded the cause of genius, vindicated the judgment of Columbus, and the soundness and practicability of his plans. There was still a moment's hesitation, the king looked coldly on; how could Isabella draw on their exhausted treasury for a project to which he was adverse? But suddenly, with the force of an inspiration, the vast interests at stake darted into her mind, her generous spirit was enkindled, and her eyes were opened; with an enthusiasm worthy of herself and of the cause, she exclaimed, "I undertake the enterprise for my own crown of Castile, and will pledge my jewels to raise the necessary funds."

The king signified his compliance with his usual grace, leaving, however, to the crown of Castile all the expense and risk of the enterprise. Luis de St. Angel did more: receiver of ecclesiastical revenues in Aragon, he pledged all his jewels to the crown of Castile, and declared himself ready to advance the needful money. Good Father Juan Perez, now that his prayer had been so fully heard, retraced his steps to Palos, praising the name of Him who holds in His hand the hearts, not so much of kings, as of queens. Less than a month after his return to the convent of La Rabida Columbus joined him there, armed with the Capitulation, as it was termed, bearing the signatures of Ferdinand and Isabella, in authorization of his enterprise. To this had been added a letter of privilege, or "commission," raising Christopher Columbus to the dignity

of Grand Admiral in all the continents by him discovered, and conferring on him and his heirs the title of Don.

Lastly, Palos de Moguer in Andalusia was fixed on as the place whence the expedition was to set sail. For some previous misconduct this little sea-port, which Columbus knew so well, had been condemned to serve the crown for one year with two caravels armed and manned; these caravels were now required to be in readiness within ten days after the royal order had been read to the natives of Palos in the church of St. George by the notary public.

When the nature of the service for which they were ordered to hold themselves in readiness came to be known, though the authorities signified their submission, astonishment and repugnance spread throughout the populace; the same seamen who up to that moment would all have been ready to vouch for the accuracy of Columbus' ideas, as soon as they were called on to aid in their realization drew back in horror.

Up to the last Columbus, whom we shall henceforward style the Admiral, had many difficulties to contend with, many prejudices to combat; but in the end, backed by the authority and the persuasive eloquence of Juan Perez and his community, who did not cease to exert their influence in support of the enterprise, he triumphed over them all.

The most important conquest that was made was that of Martin Alonzo Pinzon, a rich and experienced navigator, who, with his two brothers, at length came forward, decided to take a personal interest in the scheme, to aid in the equipment of the three caravels, and themselves to sail in the expedition.

From that moment the difficulties seemed to lessen, for their

example had a wonderful effect throughout the neighbourhood. The apprehensions of the seamen, who had been pressed into the service by the magistrates, were allayed, and their friends and relatives resign themselves to the inevitable, and everything is in readiness. At three o'clock in the morning of the 3d of August, Columbus, having spent his last night ashore at the monastery, walked down with Father Perez into Palos.

The little town was astir with many breaking hearts, and the spirits of the seamen, already depressed by their own fears, were still more cast down at the distress of those they were to leave behind. Passing through the crowd assembled to witness the departure of the little squadron, Columbus received the final blessing of the Father Guardian, and went on board the *Maria La Pinta,* and half an hour before sunrise, from his station in the stern, gave the order to spread the sails "in the name of Jesus Christ."

The convent bell is ringing to early mass, and gazing out to sea from the heights of La Rabida, Juan Perez wafts a last farewell to his friend.

The wind blows from the east, the source of light and of salvation; the three vessels drop down the river and are soon out of sight of the people of Palos; already they have emerged from the mouth of the Odiel, where, with the eyes of faith, I beheld them, sky and sea are alike propitious, and, as Nolo said, in forcible seamen's language with his Breton faith—the devil be hanged! for God is with them!

FIRST VOYAGE OF DISCOVERY

CHAPTER IV.

"*In nomine Domini nostri Jesu-Christi.* The most noble, most Christian, most excellent, and most powerful princes, King and Queen of Spain, and of the islands of the sea, our sovereigns, in the present year of 1492, after your highnesses had concluded

that warfare in the great city of Grenada, . . . where I saw the royal banners of your highnesses placed, by force of arms, on the towers of the Alhambra, and where I beheld the Moorish king go forth from the gates of the city and kiss the royal hands of your highnesses; . . . immediately in that same month, in consequence of the information which I had given to your highnesses of the lands of India, . . . it was determined in your capacity of Catholic Christians and princes, lovers and promoters of the holy Christian faith, to send me, Christopher Columbus, to the said countries of India to see the princes, and the people, and lands, and discover the nature and disposition of them all, and the means to be taken for the conversion of them to our holy faith. It was ordered that I should not go by land to the East, . . . but, on the contrary, by a voyage to the West, by which course, unto the present time, we do not know for certain that anyone hath ever passed. Your highnesses, therefore, commanded me to proceed with a sufficient fleet to the said countries, and for this purpose bestowed great favours upon me, and ennobled me, that thenceforward I might style myself Don, and be high-admiral of the "Ocean Sea," and perpetual viceroy and governor of all the islands and continents I should discover and conquer in the said "Ocean Sea," and decreed that my eldest son should succeed me, and so on from generation to generation, for ever. . . . I came, therefore, to the town of Palos, which is a sea-port, where I equipped three ships well calculated for such an enterprise, and sailed from the said port well furnished with provisions and with many seamen," &c.

Thus began that precious Journal of Columbus, which his

friend, the worthy but unenlightened Las Casas, unfortunately took upon himself to abridge, transmitting only a few portions of it literally, amongst others the preamble. This preamble or prologue is particularly precious, owing to the *naif* testimony it bears to the prudence of its author in the careful enumeration of the benefits and privileges just conferred upon him. He shows the same prudence there where some writers, and those well-intentioned, have been disposed to think he had let himself be guided by the blindest foolhardiness. Most historians, in the belief that thereby they were adding to Columbus' glory, have been tempted to exaggerate the smallness and the unfitness of the vessels with which he made his first voyage. The fact being, as is now well known, that, considering all the circumstances, he paid the greatest possible regard to the dictates of prudence. Just as in these days a captain who should sail, under similar conditions, on an expedition like that undertaken by Columbus, would be counted a madman, so it would have been cowardly on the part of a seaman of the fifteenth century to exact more favourable ones.

La Santa Maria, the vessel Columbus had selected for his own command, and which would have better suited his purpose had she been so constructed as to secure greater speed under canvas, was decked from end to end with a second deck fore and aft. She carried four masts—two square-rigged and two with lateen sails—and her keel measured 90 feet in length. Her crew consisted of sixty-six persons, the most important of whom were: Diego de Araña, nephew of the admiral's wife, who sailed with him as grand Alguazil of the armament, and four other royal functionaries, one of whom,

Bernardin de Tapia, is not the first historiographer whom nothing could ever have made into a historian.

There were, besides two lieutenants, Niño, an excellent and most intrepid seaman; Juan Perez Matheos, in every sense a worthless fellow; Francis Roldan, who was not much better and subsequently betrayed the admiral; several officers of different grades, amongst them Juan de la Cosa, afterwards celebrated for his ocean charts; an interpreter who spoke every language, excepting of course those he was intended to interpret; and lastly, two enthusiasts, friends of Columbus, who sailed with him as volunteers, or as we should now say, amateurs. Several of the crew were Genoese, two Portuguese, one Irishman, and one Englishman, but not one of them came from Palos, whether because Columbus wisely bore in mind the opposition he had encountered at the last moment from the seamen of that town, or because they, on their side, preferred to serve under the brothers Pinzon, their fellow-countrymen, we cannot say.

Like most of the caravels then in use, *La Pinta* and *La Niña* were decked only at the prow and stern. Martin Alonzo, the eldest of the Pinzons, with his brother Francis Martin for a lieutenant, had command of *La Pinta*, which numbered thirty on board, amongst whom was the intimate friend of Juan Perez and one of Columbus' warmest adherents, Garcia Hernandez, who sailed as surgeon.

La Niña numbered only twenty-four souls; according to the testimony of Columbus, and as the event proved, she might have carried four times as many. She was commanded by Vincent Yañez Pinzon, had at first only lateen sails, but was afterwards fresh rigged with square.

All three ships were fully equipped for war, and furnished with provisions for a year, so that, as we have already seen, the admiral considered them "well calculated for such an enterprise." One only, at the last moment, had caused him some uneasiness, which was justified on the third day of sail.

On the 6th of August, when they were already more than 60 leagues distant from Palos, the rudder of *La Pinta* was discovered to be disabled by a strong swell, and yet more by a ruse of the owners, who were on board, who hoped by that means to cause her to be left behind, and themselves to escape from a service into which they had been pressed greatly against their will. The damaged state of their vessel, of which the admiral rightly surmised the cause, determined him to steer for the Canaries, which islands they reached on the morning of the 9th by keeping a reckoning diametrically opposed to that of the best pilots of the fleet.

This first proof of his superiority in taking observations, useful as it was in establishing his ascendency, did not, however, counterbalance the inconvenience of a delay which was to last upwards of a month, and exposed him to the most serious dangers.

It gave the King of Portugal time to send out three caravels charged with the mission of putting, at all cost, by violence if needs be, some obstacle in the way of an undertaking, the glory of which had, as we have already shown, been successively offered and refused him by Columbus.

This new treachery on the part of a prince whose character he had long ago estimated at its just worth, was revealed to Columbus by one of those chance encounters so frequent in his

career wherein he never failed to recognize a manifest sign of the divine protection.

La Pinta had been repaired, and the squadron, after laying in an abundant supply of fresh provisions, notwithstanding the somewhat unfavourable state of the wind, had set sail, when a vessel coming from the island of Ferro reported to the admiral the dangers that threatened him, dangers all the greater because of the dead calm that kept the vessels loitering within a short distance of the enemy.

Christopher Columbus, our young readers have seen, was not the man to be afraid of a battle, but like all truly great men he had no love of danger for danger's sake; so now he came to the conclusion that even the most glorious victory would entail damages of a nature likely to postpone indefinitely the prosecution of his enterprise. It was absolutely necessary, therefore, to avoid an engagement at the price of which his own crews would perhaps gladly have bought the abandonment of an expedition to which man and the elements seemed alike adverse.

To the stagnant calm of the sea, already weary, as it appeared, of carrying them on her bosom, to the wind that refused to fill their sails, was added the disastrous portent of the lofty peak of Teneriffe sending out volumes of flame and black smoke.

To dispel the apprehensions aroused by a spectacle so new to them, Columbus explained the natural causes of volcanic fires, citing Mount Etna and Vesuvius, whose harmless eruptions some of his men might already have witnessed. The calm which seemed to threaten to deliver them into the hands of the

enemy he accepted, and tried to make them accept, with his usual trust in Him who makes the wind to blow whence He chooseth, and, as on their departure from Palos, in the morning of the second day a breeze sprang up with the sun, and soon carried the three caravels out of reach of the volcano, and out of sight of the islands.

As for the pirates of the King of Portugal, Columbus knew by experience that they would not venture to pursue him in the direction he was taking. Already between them and him danced the first white crested waves of those vast unknown seas, an object of terror to the whole human race, save one; those waves beyond whose bounds the bravest had never dared to pass, but which he had always regarded, and now regarded as he crossed them, but as the starting-point of his journey.

There, in fact, the voyage of discovery really began; the book without an end opened, on whose pages the imagination of man had pictured its thirst and its terror of the unknown in a strange medley of images, sublime and grotesque, corresponding to the spirit of each race and each generation. There the finger of Greece had traced a few pure lines, half-effaced, but bearing the impress of her wondrous genius; the Orient of the Caliphs, her arabesques, her dogmas, her tales in all their learned confusion; India and ancient Egypt, their processions of flower-goddesses and gods in the likeness of fishes floating in seas of milk and purple, their sphinxes with the soft eyes and treacherous smile; there, lastly, with finger dipped in blood and ink, the middle ages had scrawled its legions of spectres and devils, a tangled net-work of gloomy and

mysterious images, so well designated in the maps of the time as the "*Mare Tenebrosum.*"

In and about that sea, in the dim light of fading day, crawled, seethed, fluttered, and swam all the monsters that terror could conjure up. The enormous nautilus, able with one stroke of its live oars to capsize *La Santa Maria;* the sea-serpent, fifty leagues long, with a comb like a cock's; the sirens of Homer ceaselessly pursued by the cruel sea-monk, whom Nolo still believed in in the year of grace 1826; and finally the dreadful bishop of the sea with his phosphorescent mitre. Harpies and winged chimeras skimmed this motionless sea in pursuit of their prey; sea-elephants, lions, tigers, and hippocampi, who grazed in vast fields of sea-weeds, from which no ship could ever hope to extricate herself.

But all these were as nothing; with skill and courage the wary navigator might hope to escape even the famous sea-unicorn, who with its spiral horn could pierce and raise aloft three caravels at once; but other enemies and other obstacles remained to be encountered, beyond the power of man to overcome.

Out of this chaotic sea arose a colossal hairy hand armed with claws, the hand of Satan, La Main Noire; its existence could not be doubted, it was pictured on all the maps of the time.

From the bottom of the abyss there appeared also, from time to time, at regular intervals, the back of the kraken, like a new island, some said twice, others three times as large as Sicily. This huge polypus, who, with one of its suckers—and it had as many as the cuttle-fish—could arrest *La Pinta* in full sail, was in the habit of rising to the surface every day. From its vent-holes issued two water-spouts six times as high as the Giralda of Seville. When it had squirted out the water, it would draw in a corresponding supply of air, thereby creating a whirlwind in which *La Niña*, were she to come within its reach, would have spun like a top. The poor kraken, having laid in its provision of air, would have liked to disport itself a while on the surface of the water, but a hand of iron, La Main Noire, was always there to thrust it back into the depths, and this double movement of the living pulse of the globe was the origin of the phenomenon of the tides.

The kraken was not an evil-disposed monster; but it could not be denied that its enormous dimensions rendered it, to say the least, an unpleasant object to three little ships such as

those of Columbus' fleet. And even without the kraken, and supposing that La Main Noire, the hand of Satan, did not dare to descend on a fleet whose royal ensign bore the image of Christ crucified, which had the ever-blessed Virgin for its patroness, and sailed under the colours of Isabella the Catholic; how were they to escape from the two-headed eagle with its enormous wings, or from the formidable roc, who had seized and carried off in its talons, before the Arab traveller's eyes, a vessel, equipped with a hundred and fifty men.

That Arab was no imaginary being, but a traveller celebrated throughout the East, under the name of Sindbad, whom two of the crew of *La Pinta*, long prisoners amongst the infidels, had known at Samarcand; there many a time they had heard him vow that nothing would ever induce him again to hazard himself on the *Mare Tenebrosum*, the customary haunt of the terrible bird, which he never quitted except to lay in a fresh store of human flesh.

These fables, and many others, which a strong-minded quarter-master on board *La Truite*, who only believed in the phantom-ship, was wont to scoff at,—were not scorned by Christopher Columbus as we scorn them now-a-days; rather he admired these superstitious sailors, who, believing as they did in these tales, had yet followed him into the regions they painted in such frightful colours.

He for his part, fully convinced that the event would soon dissipate all such illusions, already tasted, as they neared that fancied hell, realities more heavenly far than the fairest dreams of his childhood.

Long before any one of his companions noticed the change,

he saw and felt, from many indications, that they were entering on a New World.

The temperature, continually refreshed by steady, gentle breezes, was less variable; the air more richly laden with vivifying ocean scents; the waters more crystalline, salt, and phosphorescent; the skies, more brilliant during the day, revealed every night new constellations; such were some of the phenomena that charmed his poetic soul, whilst day and night, —for he slept but little,—sitting or standing on the top of the castle on the high poop of his vessel, with eyes fixed on the astrolabe or the tiller, the sounding-line or the pen in his hand, observant of every detail, admiring, calculating, praying, writing, and giving his orders, he kept his reckoning with the precision of a simple pilot.

From the 9th of September he even kept two reckonings, one correct, which he retained in secret for his own use, and another open to general inspection wherein a number of leagues was daily subtracted from the sailing of the ship, so that the crews were kept in ignorance of the real distance they had traversed.

This precaution had become indispensable.

The superstitious terrors that had vanished before the pleasing reality of actual facts had been succeeded by other anxieties which, though not in contradiction to those facts, were so interpreted by the imperfect science of the times.

If the more enlightened members of the expedition, such as Garcia Hernandez, the brothers Pinzon, or Juan de la Cosa, did not believe that, owing to the convexity of the globe, return was impossible or even difficult, or think with some sailors and

many theologians that, a certain point of the globe once reached, they would be sucked into the moon owing to the displacement of their centre of gravity, at least they were not free from apprehension concerning "that protuberance in the shape of a pear, visible to the northwest in the 'Ocean Sea' at the summit of which was the earthly Paradise."

In addition to this fear, based on an opinion Columbus himself held, was there not ground for alarm in the steady prevalence, in these longitudes, of easterly winds which seemed to preclude the possibility of their ever returning to their native country.

Nor could they disregard as wholly without foundation, the rumours current concerning the new hemisphere; in the first place, that weedy sea, vaguely described by the ancients, the borders of which, judging from the large patches of herbs and weeds they had already seen, they must surely have reached.

And then, had not the compass—that wonderful guide lately discovered, and hitherto deemed infallible, varied? How were they to trust to it henceforward, here, in countries where the very laws of nature seemed to be changing in a world subject to unknown influences?

Fortunately, Columbus was always ready with an answer.

At first, the latter phenomenon had caused, even him, some slight surprise, and he determined to keep it secret; but when he saw that it had attracted the attention of others, his science and ingenuity at once suggested an explanation, which he summed up in terms calculated to insure success by their very boldness.

" It was not the magnetic needle that had lost its mysterious virtues; but the north star itself that had changed its place."[8]

Had Columbus been satisfied with this theory himself, we might be excused for smiling at it; as it is, we can but admire him for having been able, at least in his notes, to put the question scientifically, which, for his crew, he had to solve in the expeditious fashion of an Alexander.

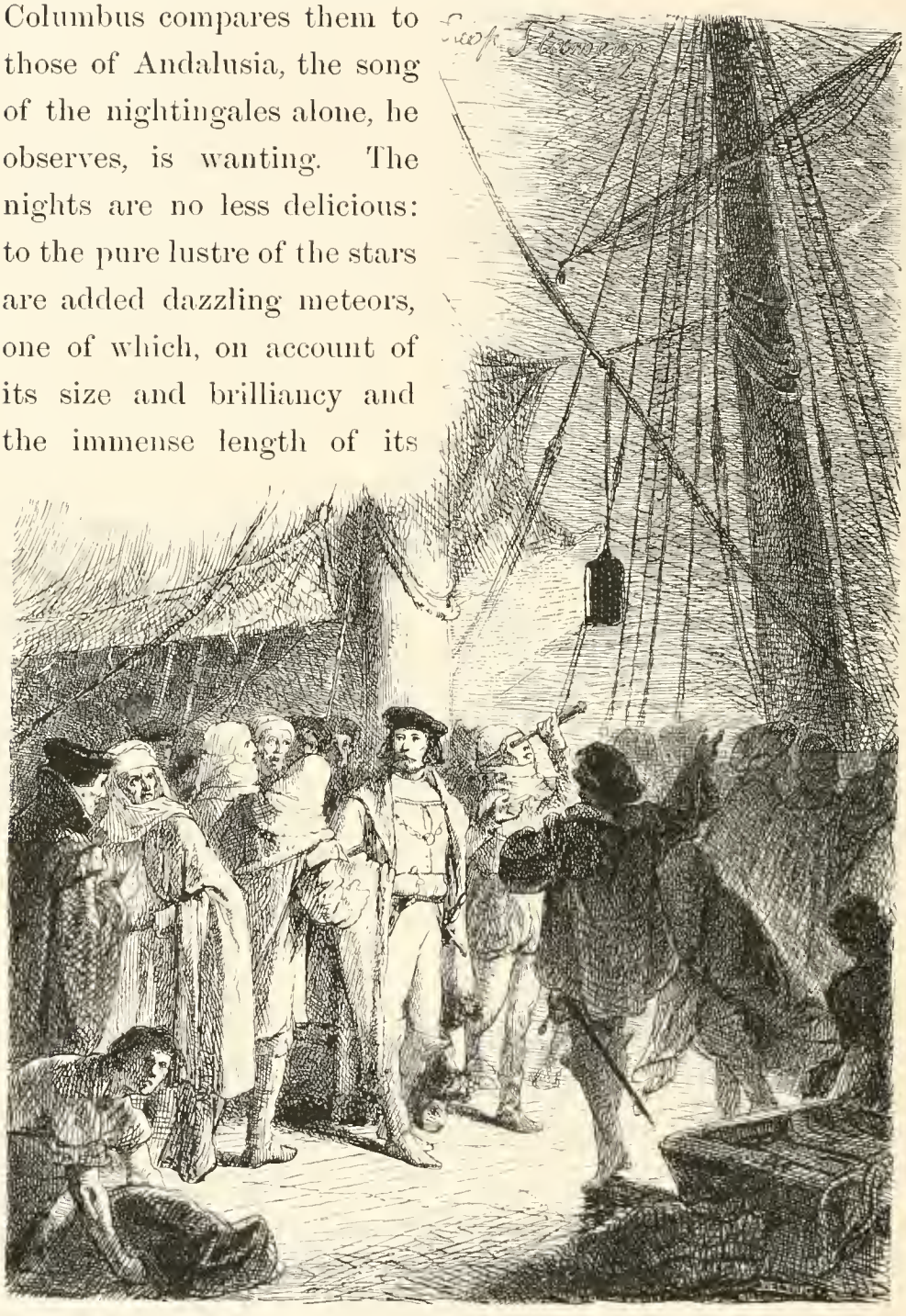
But as has already been said, it is less to the son of Philip than to that of Laërtes, that he ought to be likened with all the reservations implied by so profane a comparison. Like the sage protected by Minerva, he observed the maxim: "Help thyself and heaven will help thee." His explanation of the variations of the compass is worth all the impositions practised on the silly Polypheme, and the stratagem of the two reckonings beats all the cleverest stratagems resorted to by Ulysses.

But then, like the latter, he had to command men so inferior to him in feeling and understanding, that everything was permissible, so at least Columbus thought, and with reason; but with all his genius he would never have been able to reduce them to submission had it not been for occasional interpositions of heaven, whose aid, on account of his courage and self-reliance, he deserved.

On leaving the Canaries everything went well for the first few days. The terrors of the crews gave place to excessive confidence, excessive, in as much as it caused them to exaggerate the nearness and the facility of access of countries, at first deemed so distant and so unapproachable.

From the 14th of September, the day after the episode of the variations of the needle, the atmosphere became so soft and

balmy, the mornings especially were so smiling and radiant, that Columbus compares them to those of Andalusia, the song of the nightingales alone, he observes, is wanting. The nights are no less delicious: to the pure lustre of the stars are added dazzling meteors, one of which, on account of its size and brilliancy and the immense length of its



luminous train, struck the sailors with awe, but filled Columbus, to whom it appeared as a flame of fire, a celestial palm, a presage of coming triumph, with wonder and admiration.

Nor were there wanting other indications to confirm his hope that land was near; a sea-swallow and a ring-tail were seen by the crew of *La Niña*, and it was known that such birds seldom fly more than twenty-five leagues from land. Another day, birds of the same species were observed flying towards the west, and Martin Alonzo Pinzon, thinking there was land not very far distant, conceived the idea of robbing Columbus of part of his glory, and gaining for himself the honour of being the first to reach it; and as *La Pinta*, the vessel he commanded, was a fast sailer, he crowded canvas, and used every effort to keep as far as possible in advance.

The further they went the more these favourable signs multiplied. Several small singing birds visited the ships, and perched on the yards and rigging, which they apparently took for trees.

Their appearance and warbling not only cheered Columbus himself, and added confirmation to his hopes that the long wished for land was not far distant, but tended greatly to calm the apprehensions of the crew, and raise their spirits.

On several of the patches of sea-weed that floated past the ships live crabs were noticed; the following morning several gannets flying south-west passed over *La Santa Maria*, and the Admiral, who shared the common illusion, pointed out that all birds of that kind sleep on shore, and fly out to sea in the morning in quest of food; it was therefore certain that there must be land to the north-west; and yet neither these indications nor the prayers and entreaties of the crews availed to

make him alter his course, he continued to steer towards the west, which was his route: his reply to their remonstrance and entreaties was, "The weather is propitious, and with the help of God we shall see everything on our return."

As, with that confidence he never lost, he pronounced the word "*return,*" several of the sailors shook their heads in doubt, amongst them Matheos. the lieutenant, already, and with good reason, regarded by Columbus as the most mutinous spirit amongst the crew, who was bold enough to answer the severe look of the Admiral, by observing that the prevalence of the trade winds—though they were not as yet known by that name—which wafted them so steadily to the west, must make their return impossible.

Columbus, who was not in the habit of saying much, merely remarked that he had said "with the help of God;" whereat the lieutenant smiled a scornful smile. But, shortly after, as if to confound the scorner, the wind changed, and began to blow from a contrary direction.

It was not long, however, until Matheos thought he had found his revenge, for as the ships slowly advanced, they encountered great masses of sea-weed, more than seven times the area of Spain, which closed around them, and threatened to make escape impossible. The wind fell, and it seemed as if they were doomed to lie with drooping sails and useless oars, with the prospect of dying of hunger. The fear that some disaster of the kind was about to overtake them, was strengthened by the recollection of the traditions current concerning the *Mare Tenebrosum,* and the accounts given by ancient writers of vast fields of stagnant weeds, wherein ships were said to become

immovably fixed; but again by the help of God the terrors of the crews were dispelled, for a heavy swell came on, great billows rose and fell; the first impression produced by the change was terrible, for it was unaccompanied by any wind, and Matheos, who, though he did not believe in God or in the genius of Columbus, believed in the devil, the kraken, and the great sea-dragon, now fancied he saw La Main Noire in the red light of the setting sun.

But soon the wind arose and blew from the north-west; the prows of the caravels burst their vegetable chains; and the crews hailed with joy new indications of the vicinity of the promised land. Matheos laughed at his fears, though he continued to conspire against the Admiral, and the latter wrote in his journal the simple words Las Casas has happily transmitted: "This high sea was most providential to me; such waves have never been since the time of the Jews, when the Egyptians started in pursuit of Moses as he was conducting the children of Israel out of captivity."

But the Spaniards who sailed with Columbus were no less ungrateful than God's chosen people, no less difficult to lead, and no less inclined to regret the flesh-pots of Egypt. Now that they were in a measure freed from the superstitious terrors which had oppressed them since their departure, the thought of the immense expanse they had traversed took possession of them, and filled them with uneasiness and dismay.

And yet on the 1st of October, they believed themselves to be not more than 584 leagues from the Canary Islands being in reality 707. Columbus reckoned, that according to the map they ought to be within one day's sail of the Indian shore.

The error arose from mistakes in the calculations of the diameter of the earth, but a great number of the seamen began now to suspect his sincerity. That he could have so far deceived himself, they were hardly prepared to admit, such was the opinion they had of his superior knowledge, but they were afraid that he had knowingly underestimated the difficulties of the enterprise. Appearances, it must be owned, were against him, and the more so on account of his calm indifference to the continual checks and disappointments which exasperated or depressed the bravest of his crew.

Had his heroism not been so great, he would perhaps have inspired more confidence. But as good is always met and opposed by evil, light by darkness, so it was here: on the one side, we have a hero, a champion of the faith, a man of genius and learning, one who, from his ability to overcome difficulties and his noble courage, would have been accounted by the ancient nations worthy of being numbered with the gods; on the other, the eternal principle of evil showing itself in the restless, envious soul of the traitor Matheos, who fomented the dissatisfaction of the crews, and lost no opportunity of making the most of every mishap, as if it had been brought about on purpose by the Admiral.

The insubordination of the crew was rapidly growing, and showed itself first in the relaxation of discipline. The Admiral was still obeyed, but with visible repugnance. There is no doubt that the crews of the three vessels joined together and strengthened each other in their mutinous opposition, exclaiming against him as an impostor, and openly murmuring against him. They went so far as to ask him, in tones that savoured

of command, no longer to sail on to their destruction, but to turn back before return became impossible. Columbus stood

his ground with his usual firmness, and seeing that all hope of making him yield was vain, they proceeded to plot his destruction; it was agreed that on a certain day, at a certain

hour they should prudently (*accortamente*) throw him into the sea, and give out on their return, that this "star-gazer" had fallen overboard while contemplating the course of the stars.

All this is unhappily too true, but it does not appear that the crime ever approached its execution; that a conspiracy was formed is certain, but that it ripened into open rebellion is decidedly false, as also the story of Columbus having made a compromise with the conspirators, and having said,

"In three days I will give you a new world."

Columbus never said that; I appeal to every one who has had the honour of commanding a vessel. Nor is there in his journal any mention made of open revolt, hardly of insubordination. That, however, it must have come to an outbreak had not unmistakable signs of land soon dispelled all mutinous thoughts, is at any rate certain.

On Thursday the 11th of October, one of the crew picked up a branch of thorn with flowers and red berries on it, and a staff curiously carved by the hand of man. All were filled with eager joy; night came on, according to the invariable custom the Salva Regina was sung by the assembled crew of *La Santa Maria*, after which, Columbus having announced that at daybreak land would be in sight, retired, but not to sleep; at ten o'clock, from his station on the poop, he fancied he discerned a light glimmering in the west; unwilling to trust his eyes, he called two or three others on whom he could rely, who confirmed the truth of the apparition. To Columbus it was a sure proof of inhabited land.

Cautiously the caravels continued their course, *La Pinta* keeping the lead from her superior sailing, until two in the

morning when through the silence came the report of a gun from *La Pinta*, the joyful signal of land. That land, which I will not yet designate by the name it owes to ingratitude, that land which a flame, a spirit, perhaps had already revealed to Columbus, was first signalled by a sailor of *La Pinta* named, Juan Rodriguez Bermejo.

The Admiral fell on his knees, his hands raised to heaven, and with tears of joy chanted the Te Deum, all the crews responding as with one voice. When he arose his crew came crowding round to offer their congratulations and their homage, and Matheos kissed the hands of the Admiral, High Admiral of the Ocean Sea, Don Christopher Columbus, perpetual viceroy and governor of all its islands and continents.

THE NEW WORLD

CHAPTER V.

The feelings with which the crews of the three caravels having taken in sail, lay to, and waited for the day to dawn, may be readily conceived. We require no journal to tell us that that night not an eye was closed: to kill the time every

possible preparation was made for going on shore; dress uniforms were taken out and put in readiness, arms cleaned and polished, and the ships put into a state of defence. The very men who, under the influence of imaginary terrors, had so lately been on the point of committing the most heinous crime, were now ready to fight the Grand Khan himself and all his armies at a sign from their Admiral. Matheos could not find words to praise him enough, and the other rebels chimed in in chorus. There was no danger they would not brave—they who had so lately quailed before phantoms—under the command of such a chief. In justification of these brave seamen—Matheos excepted—let it be said that they ought not to be judged by the merits of their commander, nor from our point of view. They belonged to their own time, and their faint-heartedness and lack of courage is to be ascribed to those superstitions, and above all to those cosmographical errors, which found acceptance with the learned men of the fifteenth century. How, without being on a level with Columbus, were they to believe in his genius so long as he lacked that halo of success which, in the eyes of the multitude, alone justifies a man's claim to regal honour? For us surely it is easy to overlook faults which he against whom they were committed passed over in silence, even before they had been repented of.

Columbus alone on that memorable night exhibited no outward signs of excitement or emotion. His joy, doubtless very great, was unmingled with surprise, or with any sense of satisfaction at his own personal safety. As in the hour of trial so now in the hour of triumph he was calm and unmoved. His demeanour towards his men when in a state of insubordination

was calm and severe; when they came to a better state of feeling they found him equally calm, but pleasant and forgiving.

At daybreak, impelled by a slight breeze through waters so transparent that the rocks beneath were plainly visible, the squadron began to move slowly forward, and when the sun rose the Spaniards saw before them a level and beautiful island covered with luxuriant verdure, bathed by seas of purest crystal. The wonderful beauty of the scene was such as to stir the coldest hearts. At first the island appeared to be uninhabited, but as they neared the land they descried issuing from the woods some naked figures, who, at first sight of the ships, slowly withdrew, and seemed to be observing them from behind the leafy shelter of the trees which overhung the shore.

The ships were brought to anchor, the boats lowered, and Columbus, followed by his staff, like himself attired in state, entered his own boat bearing the royal standard, and a few moments afterwards touched the land; springing on shore, he sank upon his knees and joyously kissed the ground, the discovery of which had from the beginning been ordained as the reward of his faith and genius.

The voyage had lasted seventy days, from the 3d of August, 1492, to the 12th of October of the same year; and of those seventy days about thirty-five had been lost by the necessity of putting into the Canaries for repairs.

Columbus' first thought on taking possession of the New World was of what he owed to God, his second what he owed to Spain. With that fervid eloquence which even his enemies could not but admire, he harangued his men, concluding with a prayer to God—a prayer which has been always

repeated since on every fresh discovery made by Spaniards in the Old and New World. Thereupon, planting the standard of the cross, he gave the island the name of San Salvador, and drawing his sword, took solemn possession in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ for the crown of Castile.

Immediately all the crews, with the officers at their head, proclaimed him High Admiral, Viceroy, and Governor, and took the oath of obedience to him, praying him to forgive them the wrong they had done him.

The natives soon got the better of the fears occasioned by a spectacle so new to them, and began to venture from their hiding-places and approach the Spaniards, at first evidently with great awe; but the kind reception they met with reassured them, and before long the joy and confidence became mutual. By means of signs a sort of intercourse was established between them, gifts were exchanged, and the Spaniards remained all day on shore refreshing themselves, after their long and anxious voyage, in the beautiful groves of the island. Thus ended with mutual joy a day which was afterwards followed by so many years of misery and oppression to the inhabitants of the world then discovered. It was a *dies nefastus* in the eyes of those who, too absorbed in the interests of the present, regarded the discovery of America as an event fatal to both worlds; a happy day to those, on the other hand, who, looking into the future, saw in that discovery the great fact of the restoration of humanity to its primitive unity. The former were confirmed, the latter shaken in the superstitious dread attaching to the sixth day of the week, seeing that it was on a Friday that Columbus left Palos, and on a Friday, in the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light of early dawn, that he landed in the New World: to him Friday was ever a day of blessing.

Who would believe it? Hardly had this island been discovered before it was neglected, forgotten, lost, its position even incorrectly laid down on the first map ever traced of the New World, and that by the hand of one of Columbus' companions!

There is but one explanation for this strange fact, and not a consolatory one: the island of San Salvador did not produce gold. Long after its first discovery, when for scientific purposes it had, so to speak, to be re-discovered, it was identified by some with one of the Turkish Islands, by others with Great Inagua and Little Inagua, whilst the English called it by the noble name of Cat Island.

That this uncertainty and difference of opinion with regard to its name and whereabouts prevailed very nearly up to the present day, is proved by the author of the *Cosmos* writing in 1836: "The full and precise names of all the seamen who are supposed to have been the first discoverers of the New World have been carefully preserved, and yet we are still unable to connect these recollections with any definite spot; the scene is still vague and uncertain!"

"Happily," he continues, "I am in a position to be able to remove this uncertainty." And thereupon he gives us the result of his researches on the subject, which, owing to the weight his name justly carries, partially removes the uncertainty, though it does not absolutely settle the question.

More fortunate than Humboldt, without priding ourselves on that account, we are enabled, thanks to M. Ad. de Varnhagen, to present our readers with the solution[9].

The island to which, in exchange for its primitive name of Guanahari, Columbus gave the name of San Salvador, answers on our present maps to the Lucayen name of Mayaguani.

And now, resisting all temptation to personal digressions, I shall let my hero speak for himself. It would be the greatest presumption on my part to suppose that my readers could care to hear what my impressions are with regard to the thoughts and feelings of Columbus at this eventful period of his life, when I can refer them to the account he himself has left us of that first landing—that first glorious realization of all his most brilliant dreams. In my opinion a collected edition of the writings of Columbus, accompanied by commentaries, which every one would be at liberty to read or not as he liked, would be the best history of the man and his work.

The following pages will furnish an idea of what such a history would be.

"Wishing above all," writes Columbus, "to inspire the inhabitants of this island with a friendly feeling toward us, and being convinced from all I saw that they would have more confidence in us, and would be more disposed to adopt our holy faith, if we showed them kindness rather than violence, I gave to some of them caps of different colours and strings of glass beads, with which they immediately made themselves necklaces. To these I added other trifles, which so delighted them that we were filled with astonishment. As soon as we returned in our boats to the ships they came swimming off after us, to offer us parrots and cotton yarn, zagaies and other objects, in exchange for which they received from us glass beads, hawks' bells, and other things. They took everything we gave them,

and gave us everything they had. But they seemed to me in every respect extremely poor.

"The men and women go naked as they are born into the world. They are well shaped, and with agreeable features. Their hair, as coarse as horse hair, falling over their foreheads,

and left to grow in a long tail behind. . . . Their hair is not crisped. These men are in truth a fine race; they have lofty foreheads, and bigger heads than any natives I have ever seen before in my travels; their eyes are large and fine, their legs straight, their stature high, and their movements graceful. Some are painted a blackish colour, but are by nature of the same tawny hue as the natives of the Canares (Canaries). Many are painted white, red, or some other colour, either the whole body, or the face, around the eyes, sometimes even only the nose. They have no weapons such as we have, and seemed not even to know their properties and use, for when I showed them a drawn sword, they took it by the edge and cut their fingers. There was no iron to be seen among them. Their zagaies are lances pointed with the tooth of a fish or some other hard sharp substance.

"Having noticed that several had the scars of wounds, I asked them by signs how and by whom they had been wounded, and they answered in the same manner that the inhabitants of the neighbouring islands came to attack and take them prisoners, and that they defended themselves. I imagine that these invaders came probably from the mainland to carry them off as slaves; for, to judge from appearances, they must make faithful and tractable servants. They quickly and easily repeat what they hear, and I believe it would be easy to convert them to Christianity, for they do not appear to have any religion.

"On the morning of the 13th of October we saw a number of men, young and rather tall, come running to the shore; . . . they came off to my ship in canoes formed from the

single trunks of trees, hollowed and fashioned in a surprising manner for so poor a country. Some of these canoes were capable of holding forty or fifty men, others were not so large, and some again so small that they could only hold one man. These canoes they manage dexterously with paddles. If overturned, they swim about in the water with perfect unconcern, right their canoes, and bale them with calabashes which they carry tied round their waists for that purpose. Observing that some of them wore small ornaments of gold in their noses, I succeeded in ascertaining from them by signs that to the south of their island was a king who possessed great vessels of gold and a large quantity of that metal. . . . Determining to sail thither that very day, I asked them to accompany me, but they refused, whence I concluded that the invaders of whom they had spoken came from that quarter. . . . The inhabitants of this island are gentle in their disposition: it is true that, tempted by the things we show them, it occasionally happens that, having nothing to offer in exchange, they take what they covet by stealth, and jump into the water and swim off with it; but they gladly give all that they possess in return for the merest trifles, even for fragments of glass and earthenware. I saw one of them exchange a large ball of thirty pounds weight of cotton yarn for three of our smallest coins. . . . Cotton is one of the chief productions of this island; but I am unable to remain here long enough to make myself acquainted with its other productions. On that same account, and being impatient to arrive at Cipango, I had no time to find out where the people of this island procure the gold they wear in

their noses. But night is coming on, and they have all gone back to shore in their canoes."

The following morning, according to his intention, Columbus set off with the boats of the ship to reconnoitre the coasts of San Salvador. Everywhere he met with the same friendly reception from the inhabitants. In some places he found huts roughly constructed in the form of tents, and delicious groves and gardens wherein grew vegetables and fruit-trees; and in these gardens, "more beautiful than any he had ever beheld," abundant springs of fresh water, and what from his lips is a characteristic observation, "stone for building churches."

The inhabitants came off to the boats, some in canoes, some swimming, inviting them to land; but fear of the reef of rocks that surrounded the coast made them keep at a distance from the shore, and soon they found themselves in the midst of such a number of islands that "I know not," says Columbus, "where first to go, nor are my eyes ever weary of gazing on the beautiful verdure;" and from the shore "came a fragrance so delicious and grateful from the flowers or trees of the land that it was the sweetest thing in the world."

He selected finally the largest island in sight, and took possession with the accustomed forms; as at San Salvador he erected a cross, and gave the island the name of *Santa Maria de la Conception*. Finding that there was in this island neither gold nor anything else to detain him, he prosecuted his discoveries by making sail for another and much larger one which lay several leagues to the west, to which, in honour of the king, he gave the name of Ferdinanda. The piquancy

of his remarks tempts me again to borrow his own words. "In their customs, their language, in every respect, the inhabitants of Ferdinanda are similar to those of the other islands, save that they wear some scanty clothing, and are less savage and more refined; . . . they have a better idea of traffic than the others. I have found no traces of religion, and I believe it would be easy to persuade them to become Christians, because they have a great deal of intelligence."

"The fish in these seas differ wonderfully from ours; some resemble cocks in form, and have the most beautiful colours in the world,—blue, yellow, and red, all so marvellous that it is impossible not to take the keenest pleasure in seeing them. . . .

"This island is very green, level, and fertile. . . . I saw growing there many trees, a few like ours, but most of them as different as day from night. Thus, for example, on one of these trees I noticed one branch had leaves like those of a reed, and another whose leaves were like those of the mastic-tree; and these trees, combining five or six different forms, have not been grafted, as one might be disposed to think. Very far from that; they spring up and grow on the hills and in the forests without any cultivation."

The latter observation is explained by the profusion of lianas and parasites that clothe the forest trees of the New World. Why should we regret the mistake—this mistake on the part of so great a man? No Chateaubriand, Cooper, or Humboldt, with all the magic of their descriptions, ever gave such a vivid picture of the rich vegetation of the tropics.

A still more marvellous spectacle soon presented itself to

him in a new island, to which, on account of its beauty, he gave the name of Isabella. By the inhabitants it was called Saometo, and was the most important of all they had yet visited. "Here are large lakes of delightful coolness," says he in his journal; "and the forests are marvellous, for here, as in all the other islands, everything is green; and the birds are clothed in such beautiful plumage, and have such melodious songs, that it seems as if one would never desire to depart thence: there are flocks of parrots which obscure the sun, and other birds, large and small, of so many kinds, and so different from ours, that it is wonderful."

Animals were also less rare, more various, and of greater size, amongst others the guana, a sort of gigantic lizard, whose likeness to the crocodile, or at least to the representations of it then extant, made some of the crew mistake it for one of those dreadful monsters. Glad to make use of his courage in reassuring his men, who were frightened at everything that was new, Columbus did not hesitate to attack this beast; he rushed at him with uplifted sword, and pursued him into the waters of the lake, and did not come out until, to the universal satisfaction, he had made an end of him. The skin, which he brought back with him to Europe, measured seven feet in length, more than the guanas ever measure now.

Columbus must often have smiled at the recollection of this exploit, when he found out that this terrible-looking beast, with its enormous crop, its long and powerful tail, its spine notched like a saw, its sharp claws, is as harmless as our common lizard, and is even esteemed a great delicacy by the Indians.

But neither this exploit, nor other toils and perils more real, nor the continual novelty of the scenes around him, which

intoxicated his senses and filled his heart to overflowing, none of those things, in fact, that would have diverted another from his purpose, could make Columbus forget the practical object

of his enterprise, nor the promises which gained for him the patronage and support of the sovereigns. In every place he touched he inquired where gold was to be found. To collect gold, he candidly announced, was his chief end and aim—gold which was to be changed into swords for the recovery of the Holy Sepulchre—gold which was to enhance the importance of his discoveries. And the further he went the more confident he became, from the various indications he met with, that his search would be successful.

From signs he understood that in one of the islands there was a mine of gold, and that a king dwelt there who wore rich jewels of gold; to this island one of the natives promised to guide them. But on this occasion the Admiral recognized the Indian's propensity to falsehood, or at least to exaggeration, a form of falsehood which in them is less the result of calculation than of a lively imagination and a limited power of expression.

The man did not keep his word, and after two days Columbus sailed away, so little discouraged by this disappointment that he wrote to the sovereigns: "Soon, I feel, yes, very soon I shall reach the place where gold grows." He was in fact not far from Mexico; but the sanguinary conquest of the "land where gold grows" was reserved for another.

On the 28th of October he arrived in sight of the pearl of the ocean seas, the queen of the Antilles, the island of Cuba, so striking in its magnitude and beauty as to surpass everything he had previously seen. The superiority of Cuba did not consist merely in the unparalleled luxuriance of the vegetation, the colours and wonderful splendour of the flowers; what

Columbus admired most was its extent, and the grandeur of its features, its noble rivers and lakes, its luxuriant forests, and lofty mountains. He confesses that he found it very difficult to tear himself away from this region of enchantment, which exercised a magic power over his imagination.

The names he gave to different parts of this favoured island almost all testify to his admiration and piety. Most of them have since been changed, even that of Juana, as good a name surely as Cuba. The Puerto-Santo is now called Baracoa; the Cape of Palms, the Rio della Luna, the Rio de Mares, have severally become the hill of Juan Danue, the port of Baxes, and the port of Nuevitas del Principe.

Near the latter, he understood from the natives, was a country called Bohio, that abounded in gold and pearls and spices. They described also nations who had but one eye; an island, Mantinino, inhabited by women only; another people who had the heads of dogs, who were cannibals, and sucked the blood of their prisoners. The first of these extravagances must be classed with the stories told by Herodotus. The second was found to be partly true; during some months of the year one of the neighbouring islands was inhabited by women only; and as for the anthropophagi who had the heads of dogs, they were none other than the cannibals who were such an object of terror to the Lucayens, and were called by them Caniba.

The name of Caniba or Kaniba Columbus connected with the kingdom of the Great Khan, and musing on the misinterpreted words of the natives, he fancied he must have reached the borders of Cathay, and sent off an embassy to the great

Asiatic monarch. On the 6th of November the two ambassadors returned, having found, instead of Quisai or Quinsai, the celestial city, and the Grand Khan, a village of fifty huts and a population of fine tall savages, who received them with great hospitality, regarding them, as usual, as inhabitants of the skies. There for the first time they beheld several of the natives with firebrands in their hands, and a certain dried herb which they called *tabago* rolled up in a leaf, lighting one end and applying the other to their nostrils, inhaling and puffing out the smoke. Columbus paid little attention to this peculiarity, little thinking that the use of this herb was destined one day to spread over the whole world, and become a source of vast wealth to the possessors of the island of Cuba.

The country they described as extremely beautiful, fertile, and rich in useful productions, spices of various kinds, woods for dyeing, maize and cotton in profusion; but of the gold that was Columbus' first thought at every step, they had seen but little. This decided him to leave the island of Cuba, and as soon as the weather permitted they began to run along the coasts to the south-east. While steering at large beyond the eastern extremity of the island, land was descried to the south-east, and Columbus understood from the Indians that it was none other than the dreaded Bohio, or island of Babeque, inhabited by the fierce and warlike Caniba. Still believing that he was on the confines of Asia, and hoping that Babeque or Bohio, the name the Indians invariably repeated in reply to all his inquiries about gold, was Cipango, Columbus stood on in that direction, and on Friday, the 7th of December, reached the great island, to which he gave the name of Hispan-

iola, now known as St. Domingo or Hayti. It was the mysterious Bohio or Babeque of which he had heard so much, but it contained few, if any, Caniba or Kaniba, and as for the Grand Khan, his name was not so much as known there.

CONCLUSION OF FIRST VOYAGE

CHAPTER VI.

The Admiral was still engaged in exploring the north-east coast of Cuba, believing it to be the western extremity of Asia, when an event took place which might have been productive of the most serious consequences: his forces, already so limited,

were suddenly reduced by more than a third. *La Pinta*, next to his own the largest of the caravels, commanded by Alonzo Pinzon, disappeared, and the alarm first caused by her disappearance was soon succeeded by the painful certainty of her desertion.

This Pinzon, who, as Columbus indulgently puts it in his journal, had "done many things to him" since their first setting out,—this avaricious and envious Pinzon, on the strength of information to which the Admiral had perhaps not paid sufficient attention, had determined to steer to the north-west in search of a land of imaginary wealth, and to reserve for himself all the profits and honour of a discovery which would have eclipsed all those already made.

Columbus could not easily believe in Pinzon's treachery, and waited some time in the hopes of his return. When he could no longer doubt, for the sake of appearances he sent a canoe in search of him; but at length, restraining his indignation and distress, he was obliged to continue his course. He knew and felt that neither the treachery of a Pinzon, any more than the plots of a King of Portugal, could for any length of time prevail against the power in which he had put his trust.

And, as the event proved, Alonzo Pinzon, at first the jealous patron of Columbus, and then the hostile subordinate, was to pay dearly for this his first act of open rebellion. This man, who, on account of his talents, and still more of his wealth, had considered himself freed from the obligation of obedience, was not to reap any advantage from his rebellion. He, a Spaniard, one of the powerful, the *ricos hombres* of Andalusia,

was destined not only to feel the ascendency of a man of genius, but to be indebted to the clemency of the poor stranger who at one time could not, without the help of the Pinzons, have fitted out the humblest craft.

Whilst the traitor Alonzo Pinzon was with infinite pains preparing this humiliation for himself, the Admiral prosecuted his discoveries in the island of Hispaniola, or as, to avoid confusion, we will henceforth call it, St. Domingo, the name it is now known by.

The first point he touched at, after having taken the bearings of several others less favourable for his purpose, was a harbour, to which he gave the name of St. Nicholas, the name it bears to the present day.

His first object, with the view possibly of a future settlement in the island, was to establish close and permanent relations with a population that seemed to him, if not a superior, certainly in some respects a more advanced race than the inhabitants of the other islands. The complexion of the natives of St. Domingo was fairer, their features more regular and more like our own; the men generally appeared to be strong and well-formed, and the women handsome and good-looking. They wore a covering of netted cotton round the middle, and, with the exception of the chiefs, the men had only one wife each. The country showed traces of cultivation, and inland communication was facilitated by good roads. The dwellings of the natives, some of them surrounded with rustic galleries, were divided into several compartments, and extremely clean; those of the chiefs were spacious and convenient, and not without some attempt at elegance. About four leagues to the south-

east they came upon a group of about a thousand habitations, which, if it did not exactly answer to the seductive descriptions of the famous Cipango, might yet very well pass for a town.

The houses were all deserted, the inhabitants having taken flight at the approach of strangers, carrying what they most valued away with them; but the kind treatment and the presents bestowed on one of their number, a young and handsome native girl whom the sailors had with great difficulty succeeded in overtaking and bringing back to the ships, reassured them, and, impelled by curiosity, they soon returned to the number of two thousand.

Once again, as the good Nolo expressed it, Columbus had found *the woman*.

The Admiral once only in his journal, and very briefly, alludes to this woman who so thoroughly believed in him, and was faithful even to death, and who gave him greater and more continuous help than any other person in the Old or New World was able to do. That the name of the beautiful and confiding Anacoana, signifying Golden Flower (*la Fleur d'Or*), is not mentioned must be the fault of the unpoetical Las Casas, who has so ruthlessly cut away so many passages of interest from the Admiral's journal.

What part this *la Fleur d'Or* played in the history of the first discoveries of the Admiral is not yet quite clear, but the further we extend our researches into the voluminous records of those discoveries the more important that part would appear to have been, and the more convinced we are that the history of the discovery of America will never be complete until it has been regarded from the American point of view.

This is certain—Nolo at least had no doubt of it—that the pure and lovely Anacoana, one of the queens and

priestesses of St. Domingo, very soon became the enthusiastic ally and the intelligent and devoted protectress of Columbus; in a word, was to him a second Isabella.

By her his person was considered sacred, and his celestial origin became an article of faith, and through her influence he was enrolled among the gods, the *Zémès* of a religion far less simple than he seems at first to have believed it to be.

On the 14th of December Columbus set sail from the harbour of Conception, where the vessels had lain for some time, and made another attempt to find the island, according to the accounts of the natives, so rich in the precious ore. Adverse winds drove them to an island lying opposite the harbour of Conception, to which, from its abounding in turtle, he gave the name of Tortugas. Though unimportant as regards size, the scenery was so beautiful that he gave to one of its valleys the name of Vallé de Paradiso, or the Vale of Paradise. And it appears from this time, whether it was that admiration of the country around him changed the course of his ideas, or whether he was beginning to distrust the reports of the natives, that he gave up the search for gold, and, keeping along the channel that separates Tortugas from St. Domingo, continued to explore the coasts of the latter island.

Wherever he came the same hospitality awaited him, thanks to the favourable impression produced by the messengers whom Anacoana sent from place to place throughout the island to tell of the goodness of the strangers who had descended from the skies, and went about the world making beautiful and costly presents.

Hardly had they anchored in the Puerto de Paz (the Port of Peace), on the coast of St. Domingo, when more than five hundred Indians, amongst them many women of great beauty,

came out in their canoes to welcome them, bringing their king with them, a mark of confidence highly prized by Columbus.

Although this chieftain, called *cacique* by the natives, was as bare of clothing as the humblest of his subjects, his easy and yet dignified manners betokened his superior rank. Columbus received him on board with military honours, and obtained from him some information, more or less useful, concerning the everlasting island of Babeque, of which, as Las Casas observes, they were always hearing, but never were so fortunate as to reach. Evidently there was some mistake, which it is now impossible to clear up.

Another cacique, no less friendly in his dispositions, visited him in the course of the day, and presented him with a piece of gold as big as his fist, telling him that he had sent his men to fetch a larger quantity of the precious metal for the strangers; he like the others talked of Babeque as of a neighbouring country, and in the evening withdrew into the interior of the island, where his habitation lay. Two days afterwards he returned borne in a sort of palanquin, attended by a numerous escort and two old men, of whom one appeared to be his counsellor and the other his preceptor. The Admiral, who was at dinner when he came on board, observes in his journal with regard to this visit, that the cacique would not allow him when he entered the cabin to rise or use any ceremony, and that, when invited to partake of any dish, he took just as much as was necessary for him not to appear impolite. He did the same if anything was given him to drink; he put it to his lips, merely tasted it, and sent it to his followers. His air and his movements were remarkably grave and dignified.

His dignity and discretion, however, were not proof against all the attractions that surrounded him. Whilst, with the help

of the Indians he had brought with him as interpreters from San Salvador, Columbus was entertaining his royal guest, he noticed that he turned his eyes again and again, as if in spite

of himself, on the quilt that covered his bed. Columbus, seeing this, hastened to present him with the coveted object, together with a pair of red shoes and a necklace of amber beads. The gratitude of the cacique and his officers knew no bounds, and there is no doubt that these gifts did more to exalt the power and grandeur of Spain and her sovereigns in their eyes than all the words of Columbus and his interpreters on that subject; and they left the ship confirmed in the prevalent idea, that their hosts were more than mortal, and that the country and sovereigns they talked of must exist somewhere in the skies.

To win the favour of these supposed heavenly visitants, when they found that the word gold was always on their lips, they assured them that the island abounded with wealth; told them of a region in the interior, where a cacique reigned who had banners of wrought gold, of a river whose waters flowed over golden sands, and where gold is so common that no one would stoop to pick it up, and one old man spoke of an island of pure gold.

Columbus put little trust in these tales. "Although these people," he wrote, "live not far from the country where gold is to be found in abundance, I believe they possess but little of it themselves." Had they had more they would have given it without hesitation in exchange for glass beads, coloured ribbons, needles, and particularly hawks' bells, sought by them with an eagerness only equalled by that of the Spaniards for gold. They could not contain their ecstasies at the clear musical sound of these *chuq-chuq*, as they called them, hanging them about their persons, and dancing and playing a thousand antics; for these inestimable treasures they were ready to give everything they possessed—domesticated parrots, bows and

arrows beautifully carved, garments of cotton, cassava bread, fruits of golden hue, perfumes and spices, and articles of all kinds. Such indeed was their liberality, that, as Columbus observes in a letter to Luis de St. Angel, "if anything was asked of them they never said no, but gave it cheerfully, and showed as much amity as if they gave their very hearts; and whether the thing were of value or of little price, they were content with whatever was given in return." The inference Columbus rightly drew from this excessive liberality was that the countries where the precious metal grew were not in their possession, but in that of the Caribs or Caräibs. Perhaps they would not have been sorry had the Admiral and his little band of gods gone to wrest some of this gold from the dreaded enemies of their race.

The mistake Columbus made was in supposing that the name Cibao or Civao, given by the natives to the golden region where reigned the cacique with the banners of wrought gold, must be a corruption of Cipango; just as he had mistaken Kaniba for the Grand Khan.

Seeing that the real Cipango, or Japan as it is now called, was governed at the time by a Daïri so poor that at his death he could not even receive decent burial, and that the country was inhabited by a very large, very warlike, and very inhospitable population, who, far from welcoming strangers as visitors from the skies, would no doubt have prevented their landing on their coasts, it was fortunate for Columbus, more fortunate than at the time he could know, that he continued to explore the north-east coast of St. Domingo, and made no further attempt to find the imaginary land of Ophir. Wherever he went

he encountered the same friendly reception, the same scenes were enacted as those recorded above. Whilst anchored in the harbour of St. Thomas, supposed to be what is now called the Bay of Acùl, presents were brought him from a grand cacique named Guacanagari, who commanded all that part of the island, consisting of a broad belt, ornamented with the figure of an animal with long ears, the nose and pendent tongue of which were of wrought gold, and a mask of enormous size adorned with plates of gold. This chief, of whom we shall often have occasion to speak, lived on the banks of a river at a place they called Punta Santa.

The Admiral was soon to receive more striking proofs even than these presents of the generosity, the goodness, and the intelligence of the natives and their chiefs.

It was Christmas Eve, and the sea was as calm "as a mirror," neither rocks nor shoals were near, and Columbus, who had hitherto kept watch, as on his coasting voyages he generally did, had retired to seek the sleep he needed. The crew taking advantage of his absence had followed his example, and the steersman left in charge had intrusted the helm to one of the ship-boys. While this security reigned over the ship a strong current carried her upon a sandbank, and the boy, feeling the rudder strike, uttered a despairing cry for aid. Columbus was the first to mount the deck. He ordered the master and the sailors who followed to take the boat and carry out an anchor astern to warp the vessel off, but they, panic stricken, instead of obeying his orders, rowed off as fast as they could to the other ship. Seeing that his boat had deserted him, the Admiral ordered the main-mast to be cut away, in the hope of lightening

the vessel, but every effort was in vain. Her keel was bedded in the sand, and, as the tide was running out, she was left each moment more and more aground, until she fell over on her side in such a manner as to make all hope of raising her vain. Fortunately as the sea continued calm she did not go to pieces, and Columbus and the crew took refuge on board the *Niña*, and lay-to until the morning.

The wreck had taken place a few miles from the habitation of the cacique, and Columbus immediately sent two trusty envoys to inform him of what had happened, and ask his aid.

Then it was that the humanity and the charity of this race of men, requited by us with the blackest ingratitude, shone forth in the brightest colours.

Whilst on the shores of the Old World the infamous *droit d'epave* was still universally recognized and invariably acted upon when opportunity for doing so arose, men without laws, without books, without judges, men styled idolaters and savages by a Matheos or a Pinzon, not content with rescuing the lives and the property of those whose avarice and vices had already been revealed to them, pitied them, shed tears over their misfortunes, and did everything in their power to lighten their calamity.

As soon as it was day the cacique with his brothers and relations hastened to put all their people, with all the canoes that could be mustered, at the disposal of Columbus to help in unloading the vessel; the cacique himself in person directed their labours, condoling with the Admiral, and repeating again and again that everything he possessed was at his service. He set an armed guard over the effects landed from the wreck, and, wonderful to say, not a single one of the articles carried on shore

by the natives, inestimably precious as they all were in their eyes, was appropriated by them.

That very night, perhaps in the very same hour, on a European shore a ship, attracted by a treacherous light, had struck upon a rock, and a crowd of men, women, and children,

so-called Christians and civilized beings, armed with hooks, grapnels, and pitchforks, had rushed together with savage greed to finish the work of destruction, snatch from the waves their prey, and thrust the shipwrecked crew back from the hoped-for haven of refuge.

Some such fancied contrast no doubt presented itself to the mind of Columbus when he wrote in his journal, "So loving, so tractable, so peaceable are these people, that I swear to your majesties there is not in the world a better nation, nor a better land. They love their neighbour as themselves, and their discourse is ever sweet and gentle, and accompanied with a smile; and though it is true that they are naked, yet their manners are decorous and praiseworthy."

The admiral's experience of the friendly and pacific character of these natives, "nature's Christians," as he called them, suggested to him the idea of founding a settlement on their coast. When the cacique Guacanagari was informed of his intentions he was greatly delighted, and offered to give him every assistance in his power. The Admiral, being desirous, as he has himself explained, of giving that chieftain and his subjects a very exalted idea of the Spaniards' skill and strength, made his men construct a wooden tower over a large vault, the whole surrounded by a wide ditch, and store it with all the ammunition and provision saved from the wreck, a variety of seeds to sow, and a large quantity of articles for traffic with the Indians. The work was rapidly executed under the superintendence of Columbus, who was both engineer and architect, and greatly astonished the cacique, who looked on with intelligent curiosity. Already he had partially adopted European habits, and wore

the shirt, gloves, and shoes given him by the Admiral, whom he appeared to love, and reverence like a father. As he often spoke of the dreaded Caribs and their descents upon his territory, Columbus determined before leaving to impress him and his people with an exalted idea of the great advantage an alliance with Spain would be to them. For this purpose, and to let them know that he had weapons far more tremendous than the bows and arrows of the Caribs, he ordered a heavy cannon and an arquebus to be discharged against the shell of the *Santa Maria,* whereat the Indians were so filled with dismay that they fell to the ground as though they had been struck by a thunderbolt.

The fortress being finished, Columbus unfurled on its summit the banner of Castile, and placed on a neighbouring hill the largest cross that had yet been seen in the New World, solemnly naming the fortress and the adjacent harbour *La Natividad,* or the Nativity, in honour of the day set apart to commemorate the birth of Christ. And to impress the natives still farther with an idea of the tremendous powers that were to be employed for their protection, if they continued faithful in their alliance, he caused skirmishes and mock fights to be performed by his crews, at which the cacique, clothed in a superb scarlet mantle, and his chieftains and priests, arrayed in all their pomp, attended. It was arranged that Diego de Arana, notary and alguazil to the armament, was to be left in command of the little colony, and out of the many volunteers that offered themselves to remain on the island, Columbus chose thirty-seven of the most exemplary, amongst whom were a physician, a ship-carpenter, a cooper, a tailor, and

a gunner. Columbus gave them all much admirable counsel, charging them to be obedient to their officer, reverent and respectful in their behaviour to the cacique, and circumspect in their intercourse with the natives. He warned them, moreover, not to stray beyond the friendly territory of Guacanagari, but to keep together, and do their utmost to acquire a knowledge of the productions and mines of the island, and explore the coast for a better and more convenient harbour. On the 4th of January, 1493, Columbus took final leave of the little garrison and of the inconsolable Guacanagari, and set sail from La Natividad for Europe on board *La Niña,* which carried a more precious freight than Cæsar and his fortunes.

Hardly had they left the harbour when the wind turned, so that they could not advance without tacking, and Columbus made use of the delay in taking the bearings of the friendly coast, which he could not leave without a sigh of regret. As they were weathering the promontory, to which Columbus gave the name of Monte Cristo, a sailor at the mast-head cried out that he beheld *La Pinta* in the distance, nor was he mistaken, for in a little while, a fresh breeze having sprung up, she came sweeping towards them with flowing canvas. Seeing it was in vain to contend with the wind, Martin Alonzo Pinzon made a virtue of necessity, and was soon in the presence of the Admiral, endeavouring to account for his desertion by weak and unsatisfactory excuses—excuses which, out of prudence, Columbus tacitly accepted, not, however, without noting in his journal, that, "once his mission was accomplished, he would no longer brook the misdeeds of unscrupulous men, who allowed their will to prevail against that of him who

did them so great honour." Pinzon had not only lost the confidence of the Admiral, but his credit as a seaman suffered in the eyes of the crews as soon as they perceived that in his eager search for gold he had neglected to repair his fore-mast, though it was so defective that it could carry but little sail, and had allowed his keel to be seriously damaged, by reason of which, and of a leakage discovered in the keel of *La Pinta*, the homeward voyage was so delayed that the ships fell in with storms they might otherwise have escaped.

Columbus employed the time in exploring the north coast of St. Domingo as far as the Gulf of Semana, where, in a skirmish with some of the tribe of the Ciguayans, a bold and hardy race of Indians, the first native blood was shed by the white men in the New World.

On this occasion, at least, it was shed in a just cause—that of self-defence; and as no lives were lost, and an amicable intercourse was shortly afterwards re-established between the two parties, Columbus was soon comforted.

On leaving the Gulf of Semana Columbus sailed to the south-east in search of the island of Mantinino, the abode of the Amazons, now supposed to be La Martinique. He had not, however, proceeded two leagues when a most favourable breeze sprang up for the homeward voyage; and, resisting the strong inclination to go in quest of further discoveries, he once more shifted sail, and, to the great joy of his men, resumed his course for Spain in the name of the Holy Trinity, trusting, as he said, that in spite of the misfortunes that had overtaken two of the caravels, the God who had been his guide hitherto would bring him safe to port again.

And during the first week the weather was such as to add to this confidence, but from the 21st of January onwards the changes of wind were so frequent, the calms and squalls succeeded each other so rapidly, as to prevent their making any great progress.

At every moment *La Niña* was detained by the bad sailing of *La Pinta,* who, owing to the defective state of her foremast, could only sail close to the wind.

Fifteen days later, nevertheless, the pilots, who had become extremely perplexed in their reckonings, supposed themselves at least one hundred and fifty leagues nearer Spain than what Columbus believed to be the true reckoning, and the event proved that he was right. Just as they were congratulating themselves upon the assurance of speedily being in port, a storm burst upon them, which during three times four and twenty hours kept them face to face with death. *La Pinta,* unable to hold the wind, was obliged to scud before it. Once she replied to the signals of *La Niña,* but was soon lost to sight in the darkness.

In the midst of the gloomy apprehensions that overwhelmed them the Admiral consigned to the waves and winds a brief account of his voyage and discovery written on parchment, sealed and directed to the king and queen, and inclosed in a cask, in order that though he and his ships should perish the glory of his achievements might survive, and its advantages be secured to his sovereigns.

These precautions taken, the Admiral, for one moment cast down, felt his hopes revive.

On the morning of Friday, the 15th of February, land was

descried east-north-east, directly over the prow of the caravel; the pilots, deceived by their wishes, thought it must be the coast of Spain, but Columbus declared it to be one of the Azores, which, on a nearer approach, proved to be the case.

The first reception that awaited him on his return to the Old World was to be an earnest of the troubles and crosses wherewith he was to be requited through life; for, on sending the boat to land, Columbus ascertained that the island they had reached was Santa Maria, a possession of the Portuguese crown, and no sooner had some of his people gone on shore to make a penitential pilgrimage in fulfilment of the vows made during the recent tempest, than the governor, alleging royal orders, sought to detain them as his prisoners. Columbus, as it turned out afterwards, would have shared the same fate had he left the vessel; but he was on his guard, and the governor, despairing of getting him into his power by stratagem, found it convenient to allow his guests to depart without further molestation. The pitiless storm broke upon them again with ever-increasing fury; at one moment the light caravel was tossed high in the air, and the next moment she seemed sinking in a yawning abyss. It was a memorable storm, the most terrible in the memory of man, wherein, on the coast of Flanders alone, twenty-five Spanish vessels perished.

The gallant little *Niña* did not perish; with head bent to the storm she shaved the rock of Cintra and staggered into harbour at the mouth of the Tagus. It was not the first time that Columbus achieved the impossible, nor was it to be the last.

Immediately on his arrival he wrote one of those letters he

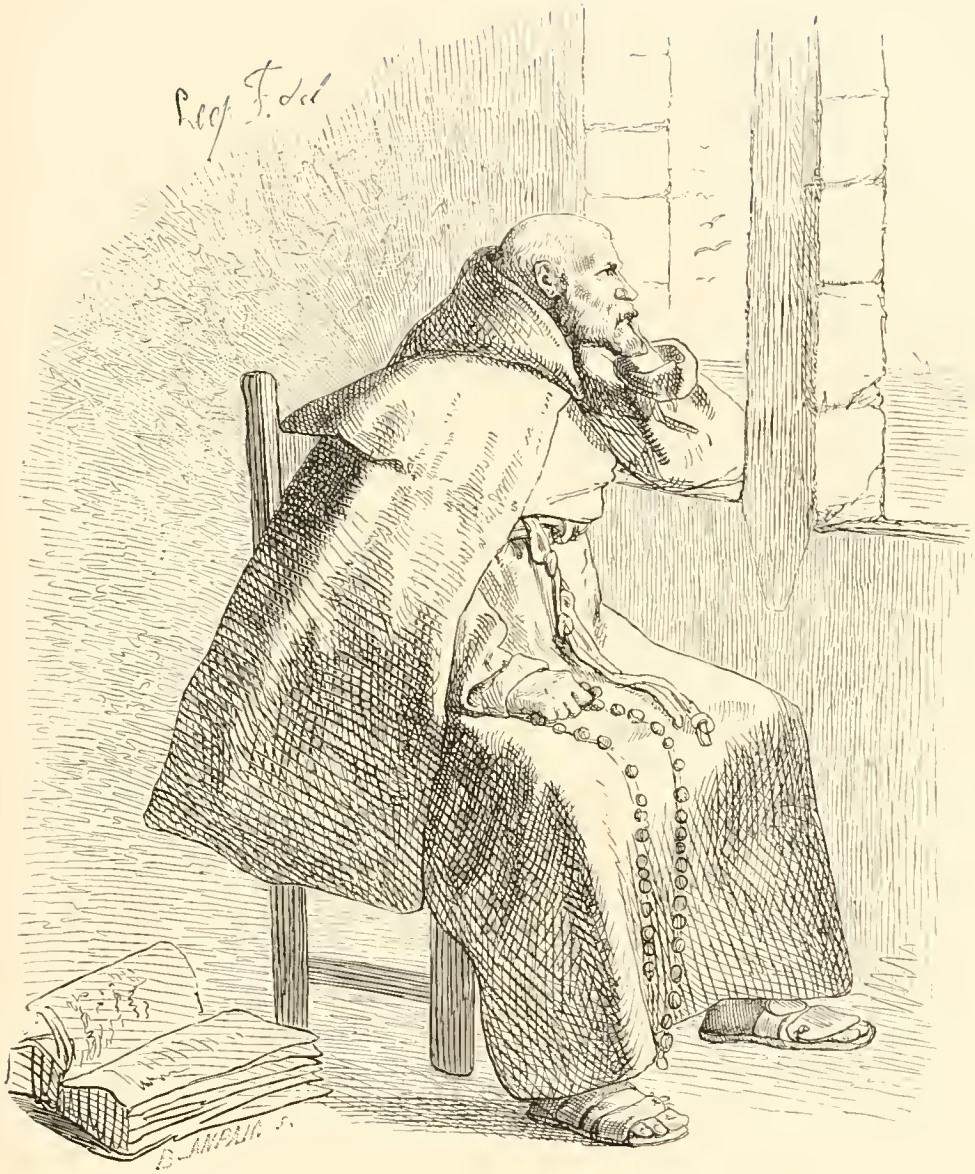
alone knew how to write to the King of Portugal, and that prince, disarmed, compliant, prudent, sent a cavalier, Don

Martin de Noroña, inviting him to court, received him with every mark of honour, introduced him into the presence of the queen, listened with much seeming pleasure to the account of

his voyage and of the discoveries he had made, and finally, but with great reluctance, allowed him to depart for Spain.

At the last moment a servant of the king arrived offering, on account of the stormy weather, to escort his guest overland to Castile. Columbus knew that a proposal for his assassination had been made to the king, but he knew also with what indignation the king had rejected this proposal. Nevertheless, all things considered, and the weather having moderated, he preferred to continue the voyage. Putting to sea once more, therefore, on Friday, the 15th of March—always a Friday—he passed the bar of Saltes, sailed up the Odiel, ran into the harbour of Palos, and threw himself into the arms of the good father Juan Perez de Marchena.

HIS RECEPTION IN SPAIN



CHAPTER VII.

It was not chance that brought the worthy Father Guardian of La Rabida to the harbour to welcome his friend.

Seven months and a half had elapsed since the departure

of the little squadron, and long before the expiration of that time, long before its return could be reasonably expected, every hour that Juan Perez could spare from the duties of his office had been spent in his observatory. There, with eyes fixed on the sea, praying, calculating, and dreaming in turn, he let the beads of his rosary slip mechanically through his fingers.

He hardly ever showed himself in the town, where every look seemed a reproach to the friend and protector of the Genoese adventurer, through whom so many families had been thrown into mourning.

So that when, on the morning of the 15th March, 1493, he made his appearance at the top of the little street leading down to the harbour; before, breathless with haste and emotion, he could reach the quay, the news spread from house to house, and, as if by magic, all Palos had gathered round him. He who had been the first to understand the genius of Columbus had been the first to recognize *La Niña* by the cut of her sails, and was now the first to communicate the glad news to those whom, next to himself, it most deeply concerned.

Who could describe the delirious joy which at that moment filled every breast: a Pomponius Lœtus would have said that "to the inhabitants of Palos the return of the sailors of *La Niña* was an event more wonderful far than the return of Hercules with Theseus and Pirithoüs from the infernal regions."

But the first exultation soon gave place to apprehension and distress. Of the three caravels that set sail from their

port, one only, the smallest, is seen to re-enter it, and that one carries the Admiral's flag at her masthead; is there not, consequently, every reason to fear that both the other vessels have perished? So that Father Perez, though he had good reason to believe that he was about to see his friend again, scarcely dared to think of the fate that had but too probably befallen the friends of many of those who were now in anxious and painful suspense crowding the quay.

We know well that the more fortune favours us the more we exact from her; so in this case, for many who that morning on the quay of Palos watched the advance of the *La Niña*, it was not enough that she had returned in safety unless she had accomplished her mission; and was that possible, considering the short lapse of time and the return of but one vessel to tell the tale?

Impossible that the land of gold and spices could have been reached, conquered, its inhabitants converted, and its treasures explored in seven months and twelve days! and there were those amongst the crowd who were not backward in accusing Columbus for his ill-judged precipitation.

But as *La Niña* stood up the Odiel the joyful shouts of her crew and the voices of her guns seemed to announce to the expectant multitude that she was returning in triumph, with her object attained; and as she furled her sails in the harbour the bells rang out to tell the glad tidings to the country round, and the whole community burst forth into transports of joy.

Whence, on such occasions, come the flowers, the banners, the gay hangings, and sacred pictures which all at once,

as if by magic, transform the dullest and soberest little town into a scene of enchantment? Who can say?

When Columbus landed he walked in procession with his crew on a carpet of flowers, under leafy, flag-decked arches, to the principal church to keep the vows made in the hour of his deepest distress. Wherever he passed, the streets resounded with acclamations; it seemed as though, by the warmth and sincerity of their welcome, the populace wished to show their gratitude to him for having brought back in safety those who had been forced against their will to embark with him on what they could not but regard as a chimerical and desperate errand, and courting a mysterious fate more awful than death itself. By a singular coincidence, whilst the *Te Deum* was being chanted in the church, *La Pinta* had entered the harbour, and cast anchor by the side of *La Niña*. Martin Alonzo was not on board. When almost in the act of landing he saw *La Niña* riding at anchor with the Admiral's flag at her masthead; he crept over the side of the vessel into his boat, and, secretly landing, made off across country as fast as he could, and concealed himself until he heard of the Admiral's departure from the neighbourhood. Between them *La Niña* and *La Pinta* had brought back every man belonging to Palos, so that no private grief mingled with the general exultation.

The *Pinta* had been driven by the gale into the Bay of Biscay, and from Bayonne, making sure that the little *Niña* had perished in the storm, Martin Alonzo had written to the sovereigns, arrogating to himself all the honour of the expedition. The severe reply he received to his letter, shortly after

witnessing the triumphal return of the Admiral, so added to the shame and remorse that the consciousness of his own treachery caused him, that he died soon afterwards of a broken heart.

Such was the deplorable end of a man endowed by nature with great talents, one of the ablest seamen of the age, whose share in the discovery of the New World entitled him to look forward to a brilliant future. The victim, like many other celebrated men before and after him, of the blindest and most ungovernable of human passions, let us hope that the faults he was led by envy to commit at the decline of a career till then irreproachable, have been expiated by the torments of a self-accusing conscience, and the blot that rests upon his name effaced.

To Columbus we can fancy what a relief it must have been not to have been obliged to institute an inquiry into his conduct, or to proceed further against him.

The day after the landing the procession, consisting of the Admiral and all his men in penitential garb, barefooted and in their shirts, followed by the whole populace, marched to the convent of Santa Maria de La Rabida, to perform the vows made in the hour of danger. And thus it happened that it fell to the Father Guardian to say the Mass of Thanksgiving. When the mass had been said and the communion received the men were permitted to rejoin their homes, and Juan Perez and Columbus together climbed the steps of the observatory, and there, in that humble chamber where they had so often discussed the future destinies of the world, they laid their heads together again to devise great things.

The scene is not difficult to picture, and the illustration of our artist gives a correct idea of what it was: a large room with bare white-washed walls, wide arched windows overlooking a vast expanse of sea and sky; two or three seats beside a table laden with books and plans, amongst which Columbus has just laid down his own maps, and the journal of his voyage, which had not yet passed through the hands of the venerable

Bartholomew de las Casas; above, in a little niche, an image of the Holy Virgin crowned with fresh flowers, with the inscription *Ave, maris stella!* beneath. With rapt attention Father Perez, whose day-dreams had found their fulfilment, hung on the words of Columbus as he told the story of his voyage.

Columbus remained some time with his hosts, his brothers

in St. Francis, attending to the various duties entailed upon him by the success of his enterprise: the brief despatch he had privately sent to the sovereigns from the Tagus was supplemented by a full narrative which was forwarded to the court, then at Barcelona.

He sent letters to Cordova informing his wife and his two sons of his return, and despatched a trusty messenger to Genoa to communicate the glad tidings to his aged father, and begged that his brother Giacomo might be allowed to join him in Spain.

Many people in Genoa must have looked with envy at this Giacomo, or as his name is translated into Spanish, Diego. He was in his twenty-sixth year, and followed his father's humble trade without nourishing any higher aspirations; who would ever have expected to see him called to the court of Spain, and transformed from plain Giacomo, the woolcomber, into Don Diego Colon, aide-de-camp of the Grand Admiral of the Ocean Sea?

As we shall see, he proved himself in every respect worthy of this honour, as also of the post conferred on him shortly afterwards of Administrator and Governor of Spanish India, and filled with distinction in the course of the following year.

With the help of Juan Perez, Columbus drew up and addressed to the holy see a faithful account of his discoveries, and proposed to Pope Alexander VI. that a line should be drawn one hundred leagues to the west of the Azores and Cape de Verde Islands, and that the Spaniards should be entitled to all the land to the west and south, a proposal approved in the famous bulls of the 3d and 4th of May, 1493.

At the same time, or rather in the intervals of his work, he performed the various penances which in that long series of storms had fallen to him by lot, and which involved pilgrimages to Santa Maria de Guadalupe, Santa Clara at Moguer, and Santa Maria de la Ceuta in Huelva. All these duties being accomplished, he went to Seville to wait for the official answer of the sovereigns. It came addressed to "Don Christopher Columbus, our Admiral of the Ocean Sea, Viceroy and Governor of the Islands discovered in the Indias;" and summoned him to meet them in person at Barcelona.

The journey, the remembrance of which survived in the provinces of Valencia, Murcia, Castile, and Aragon for more than a century, was a series of triumphs that have been compared to those the Romans were in the habit of decreeing to conquerors. Wherever he passed the roads were lined with curious spectators, who rent the air with their acclamations.

As he drew near the city he was met by a brilliant cavalcade of Spanish noblemen and a vast throng of citizens all eager to gain a sight of him, and to tender their respect and admiration.

In these days such a procession, with its motley figures and strange animals, would run the risk of being mistaken for a travelling circus or menagerie, and condemned by the municipal authorities of every quiet and orderly town to remain without the gates.

First came the pilots and sub-officers of *La Niña,* the chief of them carrying the royal ensign of the squadron. These were followed by the sailors and ship-boys, bearing poles, oars, and pikestaffs, whereon were fixed the most curious specimens that had been collected of the animal, vegetable, and mineral pro-

ductions of the New World: boughs of trees laden with their fruits, amongst them the cocoa, which was destined soon to become so important an article of food to Europe and especially Spain; cocoa-nuts, clusters of bananas, huge calabashes, a great variety of spices and rare plants, reeds of the circumference of a child's body; flowering ferns; specimens of the cotton-plant, from whose half-open pods floated like soft flakes of snow the white down destined one day to clothe so large a proportion of the earth's inhabitants, to raise amongst them questions of life and death, and be a source of pitiless wars.

Of all the vegetable productions the big golden sheaves of maize or Indian corn, to become one day the staple food of the poorer classes of Southern Europe, had suffered least from the long voyage.

No doubt the potato, introduced into France about the year 1580, as well as the tobacco-plant, figured as curiosities in the procession.

The progress of Columbus and his train is slow, the streets being almost impassable from the countless multitude, we are therefore at liberty as it wends its way along to continue our observations, and call our readers' attention to its many component parts.

Of all the productions of the New World hitherto enumerated, those most deserving of attention, amongst others the spices, produced the least effect. Special interest was excited by the famous iguana killed by the Admiral's own hand: stuffed and impaled on a pikestaff, the monster, harmless enough when alive, was gazed upon with mingled wonder and fear.

After the iguana were borne various other animals, some

stuffed, some alive, all more or less wonderful and strange both in form and colour to the inhabitants of the Old World, the agouti, the almigui, the coati, the peccary, different kinds of reptiles, *saurians* smaller but more dangerous than the iguana, whose resemblance to the crocodile of Egypt encouraged the belief that the Admiral had really discovered the eastern shores of India. Last, but not least, came the enormous sea-turtles, the red flamingoes perched on their tall slender stilts, and numbers of parrots and cockatoos of different species whose gay plumage and shrill chatter attracted general attention. This wandering menagerie was followed by a display of various specimens of Indian manufacture, consisting chiefly of offensive weapons: clubs, bows, arrows, zagaies, and tomahawks beautifully fashioned out of a particular kind of wood as hard and heavy as iron; domestic utensils of every description; musical instruments, amongst them the double flute of the ancients, which the contemporaries of Pericles and the subjects of the fair Anacoana alike blew with their nostrils.

Whilst the weapons excited the interest of the men, the women admired the trophies formed of feather dresses, the gauzy soft-tinted scarves and fine white *naguas*, a kind of flowing closely plaited garment without sleeves;—was it possible that savages and idolaters had imagined and fashioned articles so exquisite? There were likewise rainbow-tinted necklaces and diadems, made of the plumage of the humming-bird, and baskets of woven grass so fine and close that they would hold water. It might have been a consolation to the ladies of Barcelona to know that the articles which so excited their cupidity were very far from being in common use, even in the

country whence they came. They were intended as a choice and costly offering to the Queen of Castile from *la Fleur d'Or*, the Queen of Cibao. The work of women's hands, they presented a striking contrast to the *zémès*, the coarse and hideous idols that find their way in such numbers into our European museums.

Many of these images, nevertheless, found great favour in the eyes of the multitude, but it is fair to add that they were of gold, or at least coated with plates of gold; amongst them were several large wooden masks, such as we have already described, the eyes, nose, and tongue of which were of gold.

After the gods followed their worshippers—six fine Indians, tattoed according to their barbarous fashion, and decorated with rich ornaments of gold. These men with their large sad eyes aroused the pity and interest of all the lookers on. It was observed that often when the crowd pressed upon them to gain a better view of them, they turned round instinctively with an appealing air to a cavalier who followed close behind, in whom, judging by the look he gave them in return, more even than by the respect paid him on all sides, it was not difficult to recognize Christopher Columbus, the hero of the day; he who, without causing a single drop of blood to be shed, had found a new world for Spain.

The people hailed in him as he passed one of their own class, and yet one who, for majesty and grace of aspect and bearing, could well compare with the highest nobles of the land.

Arrived at the palace, Columbus entered the splendid

hall where the king and queen, surrounded by the greatest dignitaries of the court and the church, awaited his coming. As he approached, Isabella and Ferdinand rose to greet him. He tried to kneel and kiss their hands, but the queen would not permit it, and in the most gracious manner ordered him to seat himself beside her; nor would she resume her seat until he had obeyed her.

Having recovered from the emotion caused by such a reception, Columbus began, at the request of their majesties, to give a detailed account of his voyage. His words were listened to by all with profound attention as he described the islands he had discovered, enumerated the resources of the New World, displayed the specimens he had brought with him, and set forth in inspired language the great results to accrue from his discoveries to the glory of God and the progress and happiness of the human race.

When he had finished, the king and queen, the court, and all who were present sank on their knees, their eyes filled with tears of joy, and chanted a *Te Deum,* which raised the thoughts and feelings of all who heard it to heaven, "so that," says the venerable Bishop of Chiapa, himself present on the occasion, "it seemed as if in that hour they communicated with celestial delights." Well would it be for the honour of human nature could this history, like a work of fiction, end with the fulfilment of the hero's hopes and wishes. But the subsequent history of Columbus furnishes another proof of the inconstancy and short duration of public favour.

For some months still he will be the man of the day, the centre of universal admiration, the adored of the whole

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civilized world. Admitted at all times to the presence of the queen, he will find her always ready to listen to his narrations, enter into his projects, support his plans, hasten, and herself aid in their execution.

Instead of three caravels pressed into his service by the magistrates under the arbitrary mandate of the sovereigns after seven years of solicitation, and a handful of unwilling seamen, who at the last moment sought to conceal themselves, in order not to be forced to engage in what appeared to them so mad and desperate an undertaking, a fleet of seventeen vessels, three large carracks and fourteen caravels, will be placed at his command, and the number of persons permitted to enlist in his service without pay will have to be limited to seven hundred—men of all conditions, soldiers as well as seamen, artisans of every description, the ambitious, the avaricious, the curious, the bold.

We shall see him, as he sets sail from Cadiz on his second voyage, entrusted with unlimited power, provided with everything that might be necessary in possible emergencies, and with all that his experience could suggest in the way of men, animals, and implements, as likely to be useful for the projected colony; and, that nothing might be wanting to his comfort, waited upon by ten footmen—*escuderos de à pie*, and twenty other servants, who, by special order of the queen, were to attend upon his person.

What shall I add in conclusion? His voyage will be prosperous and rapid; he will land, as it was his wish and intention to do, not in the port of St. Domingo, whence he had embarked on his homeward voyage, but on the long-

sought Caribbean shore; but then . . . will begin for him a long succession of mishaps, deceptions, struggles, and finally of reverses and disasters, which cannot be passed over in silence, but which I shall, I trust, be pardoned for not dwelling on at any great length. It is the privilege of merciful and Christian heroes that in time their glory absorbs, in the softness of its light, the shame which the persecutions they have been made to suffer reflect on the human race.

SECOND VOYAGE OF DISCOVERY

CHAPTER VIII.

Columbus' first voyage of discovery was undertaken *In nomine Domini Jesu Christi,* his second he committed to the protection of Our Blessed Lady, and the ship he had selected for

his own use, one of the three carracks already mentioned, was named the *Maria-Galanta*. On the 24th of October, at dawn of day, the wind being favourable, he gave orders to the fleet which lay in the Cadiz roads to weigh anchor. An immense concourse of people gathered in the harbour and crowded the dark green line of fortifications and the row of white houses above. Even the Point of St. Sebastian, the level strip of coast known as La Isla, and the islet La Caracca, swarmed with spectators. The sheet of deep blue water that stretched between the town and the fleet was dotted with craft of every description: unwieldy galleys, feluccas, fishing and pleasure boats, not only from Cadiz but from Santa Maria, Rota, and all the ports of the Andalusian coast from the mouth of the Guadalquivir to the Bay of Trafalgar, were passing to and fro.

Around each of the seventeen vessels danced a swarm of little boats, some containing the relatives and friends of those who were about to set sail, others laden with fresh provisions and fruit, citrons, oranges, pomegranates, water-melons, and so forth, for the voyage.

Never had the beautiful Bay of Cadiz presented a more gay and lively scene. Amidst the stir and confusion of loading and embarkation no fewer than three hundred persons, most of them of idle and worthless character, contrived to get on board by stealth, and eluding the vigilance of the heads of the expedition to remain concealed until their return to the shore was impossible. These men afterwards formed the kernel of the opposition owing to which the Admiral's best and wisest schemes miscarried.

The last boat to drop off from the fleet when the gun gave

the signal to spread the sails was the one that carried the Admiral's sons, Fernando and Diego, who had attended him on board, the one still a mere stripling, the other a child.

Before two hours had elapsed the ships were out of sight, and after ten days' sailing had anchored at Gomera, one of the Canary Islands. Thence, after having taken in large supplies of domestic animals and seed for the future colony, Columbus directed his course much farther south than on the previous voyage, and on Sunday the 3d of November reached, as he with his usual prescience had foretold they would, the most southern cluster of the Antilles.

To the first island descried to the west Columbus, in remembrance of the day, gave the name of Dominica, which name it still bears. He took possession with the accustomed form and caused a cross to be erected, the first in the New World blessed by a priest of the church. That priest, who for many reasons had a better right than any other to perform this ceremony, to whom also was reserved the honour of being the first priest to say mass in the New World, was no other than our old friend Father Juan Perez de Marchena. By Isabella's own desire he had accompanied Columbus, to represent in his person two of the personages of that mystical triad to whom, after God, the discovery of the New World was due, namely, Individual Genius, the Church, and the Sovereignty.

No less than four centuries had to elapse before Father Perez's rights were fully acknowledged, rights which the lack of written evidence and the prejudices of certain writers had rendered shadowy and doubtful. The personal share he took in the second expedition has been almost invariably ignored by the

historians of the two last centuries; it was even disputed in the face of the most conclusive contemporary evidence. It may even yet continue to be passed over in silence, but it can never again be denied, thanks to M. Roselly de Lorgues, who has rendered such signal service to the cause of historical religious truth, and also to the author of the present narrative.

Thus Juan Perez was one of the first to behold the lands his friend had discovered, and, whilst he admired their magic beauty, to see it marred by the hand of man and their wealth diverted from its proper channel by avarice and licentiousness.

On leaving Dominica they sighted another island, which Columbus named after his own ship, Maria Galanta. Thence they made sail for the largest of the group, the position of which exactly answered to Columbus' calculations. It formed the very centre of the Caribbean settlement, and was called by the natives Taruqueira; Columbus named it Guadaloupe, in accordance with a promise made to the monks of the convent of that name in Estremadura. It was richly wooded with trees possessing spicy odours and laden with blossom and fruits of unknown kinds, and showed traces of careful and systematic cultivation. The villages, from which the inhabitants fled at the strangers' approach, also betokened a relatively advanced state of civilization. The houses were well and solidly built of materials suited to the climate, spacious, and conveniently arranged with apparently some attention to health and comfort. Within were hammocks of cotton net both useful and pretty, and vases and household utensils of various descriptions ingeniously fashioned out of calabashes and a kind of rough earthenware, many of which, to the Spaniards' great horror,

were found to contain portions of human flesh, evidently prepared for food. In some of the houses heads and limbs of men

and women, recently severed from the bodies, were discovered hanging from the beams side by side with dead parrots, geese, and ducks, and the carcasses of dogs and iguanas.

Here it was evident cannibalism was no mere accidental occurrence, the consequence, as some have supposed it to be, of enmity, revenge, or superstition; but the deliberate satisfaction of a horrible appetite, a common practice all the more repulsive on account of the abundance and variety of animal and vegetable food at hand.

Prepared though he had been by Columbus for the horrors he would have to witness, we can imagine what must have been Father Perez's distress at the revolting spectacle.

To Columbus it was a cause of no little surprise that these Caribs, whose courage equalled their barbarity, had offered no resistance to his landing, and had left all their possessions at the mercy of strangers; but as he found neither canoes nor weapons of any kind, and the only people in the island seemed to be women and children, he came to the conclusion that the men, previous to his arrival, had set out on a warlike expedition to one of the neighbouring islands.

Nor was it long before his conclusions were confirmed by information obtained from some women of another tribe, who, as the Caribs' prisoners, had no other prospect but that of being eventually devoured by them, and were in the meantime retained as their servants and companions, and therefore allowed themselves to be taken by the Spaniards without any difficulty.

Those who owed their temporary preservation to their personal charms were not in the end better off than the others, for as soon as their captors grew tired of them, and always before their flesh lost any of the tenderness of youth, they were killed and eaten. The same fate awaited the offspring of these

wretched prisoners, and Juan Perez, who was struck by the remarkable plumpness and roundness of these poor little victims, was informed that they were prepared and fattened for slaughter exactly like animals.

A number of the prisoners came off to the Spaniards' ships for refuge, and Columbus ordered some of the women to be sent on shore decorated with the objects most likely to tempt those of the Caribs who remained in the island to come out of their hiding-places to see the strangers; but the unhappy creatures very soon returned, stripped of their ornaments and horribly maltreated, but without having succeeded in persuading any of the islanders to accompany them. Columbus took them on board again, and as soon as an opportunity offered they were restored to their own homes.

Animated as he still was by the desire to meet the Caribs face to face, believing that on account of their superior hardihood, subtlety, and enterprise they would one day prove more useful allies to Spain than the pusillanimous and voluptuous Ciguayans, the Admiral steered along the coast of Guadaloupe towards the north-west, in the hope of falling in with the warriors of the tribe returning from their predatory expedition.

As he passed between the thickly clustered islands he gave the names to the more important: Montserrat, which had just been entirely depopulated by the Caribs; Santa Maria la Redonda, Santa Maria la Antigua, still known as Antigua and San Martin, which the Admiral, with a party of five-and-twenty men, went on shore to explore. They found a village deserted by its inhabitants; but succeeded in securing a few captives whom the Caribs had brought thither from a neighbouring

island. As they were returning to the ship a canoe with six natives, two of them women, coming from a distant part of the island, rounded a small promontory and suddenly arrived in full view of the ships. Taking advantage of the amazement produced by what to them must have appeared as something supernatural, Columbus steered his boat in such a manner as to cut off their retreat to the shore. Seeing escape was impossible, the natives seized their bows and assailed the strangers with a flight of arrows. Several of the Spaniards were instantly wounded, and fearing the arrows might be poisoned, Columbus, by a dexterous movement, ran his boat upon the canoe and upset it, hoping by that means to disable the enemy; but they continued to fight in the water, rallying from time to time upon sunken rocks and discharging their arrows at their pursuers in the boat. The women, one of whom seemed to be a queen and was accompanied by her son, a young lad, fought as valiantly as the men, and made quite as good use of their bows.

Different writers have given different versions of the issue of the skirmish, but all are agreed in stating that the queen's son was transfixed with a lance, and notwithstanding the care bestowed upon him died shortly after he was conveyed by the Spaniards to their ship, "displaying," says an eye-witness, "the courage of a Libyan lion."

The same writer says that the appearance of the heroine mother and the four warriors was such, that it was impossible to look at them without a thrill of horror, so hideous and terrible were their forms and countenances.

Columbus was convinced that he had at last met the

redoubtable Caribs face to face, but a further acquaintance with them had to be deferred to a future occasion, as he was in haste to reach St. Domingo. To the surprise of all on board he steered his course in these latitudes as if they were quite familiar to him, and taking, as he went, the bearings of the islands of Santa Cruz, Santa Ursula, and the countless cluster of islets to which he gave the name of "the Eleven Thousands Virgins," he cast anchor on the 22d of November in the Gulf of Semana, at the very same spot where, eleven months before, he had parted from Arana and his garrison.

A reconnoitring party was immediately despatched to the mouth of the Rio del Oro, or the Golden River, and the first thing the sailors found as they were ranging along the coast was the body of a man tied to a stake in the form of a cross, in such a state of decay that it was impossible to distinguish to what race he belonged. Their gloomy suspicions were confirmed, on the following day, when two other bodies were found, which the Spaniards knew, from the beard on the face of one, must be the corpses of two of their countrymen.

This dismal spectacle prepared them for the worst, nor was it long until Columbus learned, from Indians who came off in their canoes to the ships, that a short time after his departure the fortress had been surrounded and set on fire, and all its inmates massacred, by the Cacique of the Golden House, the terrible Caonabo, a Carib by birth.

Had, then, the fair Anacoana lost her influence over her savage lord? or had she, in consequence of the crimes of the Spaniards, abandoned them to the just vengeance of her people? It was difficult, from the reports of Guacanagari, who hastened

to visit Columbus, to find out the real truth. That chieftain, if his word was to be trusted, had done all in his power to avert the disasters that overtook the garrison, even to fighting in his own person against Caonabo, his ally; but as the wound in his leg, which he alleged as a proof of the truth of his story, turned out to be a feint, he was suspected by all but the Admiral of the blackest perfidy. The confidence Columbus continued to repose in him, a confidence which, had it merely been feigned, would have been the wisest policy, was in the end fully justified; but those around him were not of the same mind, and he had to reject counsels as foolish as they were violent, and shut his ears, moreover, to all kinds of imputations against himself suggested by the fate of the infant colony. But the fact was, had the Spaniards whom he had left at La Navidad followed but one of the injunctions he had given them at parting, and that the most express, namely, never to be absent from the fortress at night, the catastrophe which a Boïl and a Fonseca dared to attribute to his rash imprudence could never have occurred. The *Niña* was hardly out of sight before Diego de Arana's authority had been set at defiance in all the most essential points; not satisfied with treating the Indians at every opportunity with the greatest cruelty, the majority of the garrison roamed about the country in twos and threes seducing the women, even the wives of the chief men in the island, committing every kind of excess, and living at loose quarters amongst the natives. With the utmost difficulty the governor succeeded in keeping ten men in the fortress at night, and of those ten not one would ever consent to maintain any lengthened watch.

Had it not been for the careless security in which they thus lived, and the discords and incessant wrangling that divided them, it would never have occurred to Caonabo and his warriors to perpetrate the massacre, for which, therefore, its victims could alone be accounted responsible.

In any case all hope of a pacific conquest was now at an end, and the necessity of forming a safe centre of action, and possibly of defence, for the European settlement was urgent. A suitable site was soon fixed upon, with water, stone, and wood close at hand, where a little city, destined one day to be the Spanish capital of St. Domingo, was founded, and on the 6th of January, the anniversary of the taking of Grenada, received the name of Isabella.

In the space of two months, with the help of the Indians, whom the Admiral's presence had restored to confidence, the city sprang up, encircled by a dry stone wall to protect it from sudden attack, and fortunately for the colony, which was already threatened with famine, some of the seed they had sown on their first landing began to fructify.

Confined by indisposition previous to his departure from Spain, Columbus had been unable to control the proceedings of those who had been intrusted, by order of the queen, with the provisioning and equipping of the fleet, and not until the cargoes were discharged at St. Domingo did the whole extent of their peculations and frauds become known. Not only as regards the quantity but also the quality of the stores furnished, Columbus found he had been shamefully cheated and deceived on every side. Added to the evils arising from the scantiness and the badness of the provisions, strange maladies,

caused by noxious vapours and aggravated by vicious indulgence, broke out amongst the Spaniards. Hands to grind the wheat were growing scarcer every day, and Columbus ordered all the men, the cavaliers and gentlemen of rank as well as their inferiors, to take their turn at the grinding, and put the whole community on short rations. These measures called forth loud murmurs, and many youthful hidalgos of high blood and haughty spirit, who had embarked in the expedition with the most visionary and romantic anticipations of wealth and distinction, refused to submit to what they considered a cruel and needless degradation. Contrary to all reason and wisdom Father Boïl, the vicar-apostolic of the expedition, who owed his appointment to the misspelling of a name, sympathized and sided with the malcontents. Irritated, it was said, by the rigid impartiality and discipline Columbus exercised, and unable, being naturally of a vindictive spirit, to forgive him for having rejected his advice to make a public example of Guacanagari for his supposed treachery, he now, in the face of the Admiral's conscientious efforts to save the colony from perishing, committed the egregious folly of excommunicating him. To his meaningless anathemas the Admiral Viceroy of the Indies replied by putting him and his companions in discontent on bread and water, which soon reduced them to silence. It was the first time Columbus had exercised the right of punishing offenders in his new government, and his prompt action, necessary as it was for the maintenance of order and discipline, so exasperated the party hostile to his views and his person that the twelve ships despatched shortly after to Spain under the command of Antonio de Torres, carried, together with his

own sanguine letters to the sovereigns concerning the success of the expedition, the most violent censures on his conduct to the delinquents' friends at court.

Hardly had the ships sailed before Columbus had to take vigorous steps to check a mutiny set on foot by the hidalgo faction: Father Boïl, that unworthy representative of spiritual authority, was again discovered to be one of the chief supporters of the rebels, yet Columbus' only revenge was to appoint him one of a council of four to govern the colony in his absence, under the presidency of his brother Don Diego.

But Father Boïl was not one to be disarmed by the generosity of an adversary; he was altogether incapable of understanding the great soul of Columbus; and when the Admiral left Isabella to prosecute his discoveries and reduce the Caribs to subjection, he left behind him enemies more formidable far than those he went forth to meet.

On a previous armed excursion into the interior he had marked out the course he intended to take, and had acquired some knowledge of the geological and political character of the country, having ascertained which streams were auriferous and where traces of copper had been discovered, and that the island was divided into five little kingdoms under five independent caciques.

The territory of Guarionex, the greatest of these caciques, was the immense fertile plain, named by Columbus the Vega Real, in which the city of Isabella was situated; and Caonabo, the most warlike of the five, who owed his power to his own prowess and the love of the fair Anacoana, reigned over the southern and most mountainous part of the island.

Between Caonabo's chief place of residence and the city of Isabella Columbus had caused a fortress to be erected, intended to protect the passage from Isabella to the gold-fields, and had intrusted the command of it to Pedro Margarite with a garrison of fifty-six men.

On the 24th of April Columbus set sail from Isabella with three caravels, manned chiefly by men from Palos. He was accompanied by his faithful friends Juan Perez, and Juan de la Cosa the famous cosmographer, and Chanca the court-physician, whose letters contain much that is valuable and interesting.

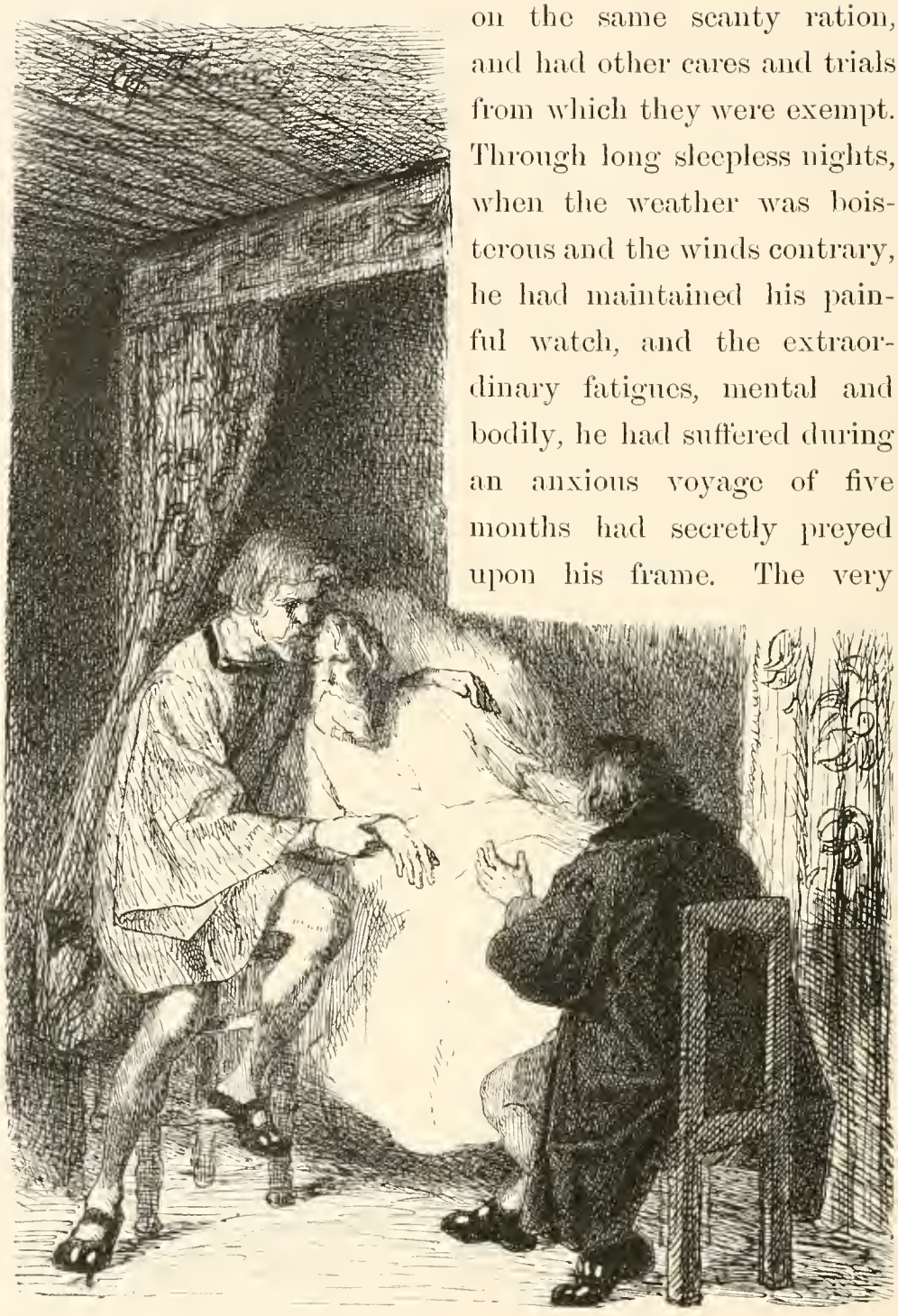
The most remarkable incidents of this voyage, the details of which it would take too long to recount, were the discovery of the island of Jamaica and the exploration of almost the whole of the southern coast of Cuba. Once more they just failed to discover that Cuba was an island; on the southern as before on the northern coast they all but reached the western extremity, when the vessels having suffered considerable damage, Columbus unwillingly saw himself compelled to turn and retrace his course, he himself and all who were with him still firmly convinced that Cuba was the mainland of Asia.

At Jamaica he found a handsome, intelligent, and industrious race of men, who appeared, however, to partake of the warlike nature of the Caribs, for they received him with every mark of the fiercest hostility; and it was not until he had beaten them in several encounters that the caciques sent envoys proffering peace and friendship, and an amicable intercourse was established between them.

When this too short-lived peace was concluded, an old chieftain of eighty years came forward and addressed Columbus in a

speech full of noble and elevated sentiments and charity—altogether surprising from an untaught savage. Columbus was deeply impressed, especially as the chieftain expressed his willingness to follow a leader so valiant and gentle to "the land of the morning—to heaven." The entreaties and tears of his wife and children alone induced him to give up his intention.

Leaving Jamaica the little squadron once more steered for the island of Cuba. Wonderful scenes met them at every turn. One day the air was alive with gaily-painted butterflies, another the whole sky was darkened by flights of sea-birds. Navigation was slow and dangerous owing to the shoals and sand-banks in which the vessels were again and again involved, and more than once the sea was so thickly covered with tortoises that they found it difficult to proceed. To the great alarm of the crew, extraordinary changes took place in the colour of the water, which from being of the most dazzling white, would suddenly become intensely black. Hardly had they got clear of the islands when they were assailed by furious gusts of wind and rain, which pelted the crazy vessels and harassed the enfeebled crews. For nearly two months they had been struggling with perpetual toils and perils, and suffering from a scarcity of provisions. On the 19th of August they lost sight of the eastern extremity of Jamaica, to which Columbus gave the name of Cape Farol, but they had still many toilsome days before them. It was the intention of Columbus, notwithstanding the shattered condition of the ships, to continue farther eastward and prosecute the discovery of the Caribbee Islands; but his physical strength suddenly gave way. He had shared in all the hardships and privations of his men, had put himself



on the same scanty ration, and had other cares and trials from which they were exempt. Through long sleepless nights, when the weather was boisterous and the winds contrary, he had maintained his painful watch, and the extraordinary fatigues, mental and bodily, he had suffered during an anxious voyage of five months had secretly preyed upon his frame. The very

day the ships left the island of Mona, situated between St. Domingo and Cuba, with the intention of prosecuting their voyage eastward, his overtaxed strength broke down and he was struck by a kind of catalepsy, attributed by Chanca to his frequent vigils, which deprived him at once of all his faculties. He fell into a deep lethargy, and was borne back by his crew, as Chanca writes, "half dead, to the harbour of Isabella."

When, after five days and nights, his faculties returned, his eyes opened on the robust form of his brother Bartholomew sitting by his bedside.

"He knows you," cries Diego, "he will live."

"See, his eyes are full of tears, he is saved!" exclaimed Juan Perez.

And he recovered. The presence of his brother, with his prompt, active, and fearless spirit, his quick intelligence and deep devotion, was an inexpressible comfort and help to him.

Bartholomew was in France seeking a patron for his brother when he received the news of the discovery of the New World and his brother's return. Furnished by the king, Charles VIII., with money to defray his journey to Spain, he hastened thither; but did not reach Seville till after the departure of the second expedition. He was received with distinguished favour by the queen, and being an experienced navigator, was put in command of four caravels freighted with supplies for the new colony, and sent to aid his brother in his enterprises, bearing a letter and presents to him from the queen.

The whole island, in the absence of Columbus, had become a scene of discord and confusion. Pedro Margarite had rebelled against the authority of Diego Columbus, abandoned his post,

and together with Father Boïl and a band of malcontents had taken possession of some ships in the harbour and set sail for Spain.

His desertion had left the soldiers at the fort of St. Thomas without a recognized commander; they roved about in bands and lived by rapine until many of them were massacred by the incensed Indians. Of the five caciques who reigned in the island, Guacanagari had been the only one to refuse to join in the league Caonabo headed against the Spaniards.

Failing in his attempt to surprise the fort of St. Thomas, which, on the departure of Margarite, had been left in the charge of Ojéda, the Lord of the Golden House had made his allies adopt the scheme of starving out the strangers by ceasing to cultivate the land and destroying all the growing crops.

Informed of the plot by Guacanagari, Columbus was more than ever impressed with the necessity of securing the person of Caonabo as the leading spirit of the insurrection, and by a stratagem which might in those days pass for fair and open warfare Ojéda caught and delivered him up, bound hand and foot, to Columbus. At the news of his capture a general rising took place in the island; but the large army assembled by Caonabo's brother was soon routed by Bartholomew Columbus with a handful of foot soldiers and a little troop of horse under the command of the valiant Ojéda.

In order to maintain the subjection of the island Columbus immediately caused three fortresses to be erected overlooking the Vega Real. Peace being once more re-established, he turned his attention to the acquisition of gold, and laid the caciques under tribute to furnish every three months a certain

quantity of gold-dust, hoping thereby to satisfy the extravagant expectations and demands of Spain. Meanwhile his brother Diego returned to Spain to answer the grave charges brought against him at the court by Father Boïl and Margarite. The party of his accusers was very strong, and Diego had the mortification of being sent back to St. Domingo attended by a delegate of the crown, one Juan Aguado, who was commissioned to institute a formal inquiry into the conduct of the viceroy and investigate the condition of the colony.

The meekness with which Columbus signified his submission to the royal will quite disconcerted the commissioner, who came prepared for haughty resistance and violent indignation.

When Aguado had, as he thought, collected sufficient evidence against Columbus to achieve his ruin, and was preparing to return to Spain, Columbus determined to accompany him and justify his conduct in person to the sovereigns. He embarked in the trusty little *Niña*, taking with him a number of invalids, and home-sick and disappointed colonists, and thirty Indians, including the cacique Caonabo and his brother, and on the 10th of March the two caravels set sail for Spain.

The Lord of the Golden House, waited upon in the course of the voyage by one of his own native heroines, an Indian female of high rank who had left all to follow him, maintained his haughty nature to the last. In vain Columbus promised he would restore him to his liberty, his country, and his power as soon as he had been presented to the King and Queen of Castile. Unable to bear the humiliation of his position, his wild nature pined in captivity and he expired before reaching Spain, and his brother outlived him only a few days.

The voyage was long and tedious. The vessels had to work their way against the whole current of the trade-winds, and encounter continual storms. Provisions became so scarce that by the first days of June famine stared them in the face, and the firmness and determination of Columbus alone saved the Indians on board from falling a prey to the desperate crew. He exhorted them to patience, assured them that in three days they would be in sight of land, and did all in his power to appease their savage impulse. Though not one of them believed him, his absolute authority prevailed, and by the grace of God, on the 11th of June, 1496, the two vessels cast anchor in the Cadiz roads.

THIRD VOYAGE OF DISCOVERY

CHAPTER IX.

If anything could add to the contempt every lofty soul instinctively feels for that base counterfeit of glory we term popularity, I would here pause to relate in full all the circumstances that attended Columbus' return to the port he

had left twenty-nine months before under such favourable auspices.

But it is enough to say that there is not a word in his writings to show that he faced the striking contrast other than as a Christian should. He had brought with him, as before, such samples of the productions of the western hemisphere as would, he thought, be likely to strike the public eye, and keep alive the feeling of curiosity; but the novelty of the thing had passed, and the wan and sallow faces of the voyagers provoked the bitter jest that they had returned with more gold in their faces than in their pockets. In short the scepticism of the public seemed now quite in proportion to their former overweening confidence.

But what must have affected him far more painfully than the coldness and indifference of the people's reception, was the long silence of the sovereigns after he had sent to inform them of his return. One whole month he waited for their answer, probably at La Rabida in the company of his friend Juan Perez, who had returned with him, and of whom, from that time, we hear no more except the bare fact that he died before Columbus. We know on good authority that Columbus had resumed the habit of the brothers of St. Francis, and that when the royal letter summoning him to court at length reached him, he repaired to Burgos clad in that humble garb.

On his journey through Andalusia he passed some days under the hospitable roof of Bernaldez, who dwells with much satisfaction on the remarkable appearance of the Indian chiefs following in the Admiral's train, gorgeously decorated with golden collars and coronets. But neither the attractions

of the spectacle nor the glowing representations of Columbus, who fancied he had discovered, in the mines of Hispaniola, the golden quarries of Ophir, could rekindle the dormant enthusiasm of the nation.

Cold as the official summons had been, and fully prepared as Columbus was to find the sovereigns prejudiced by the accusations his enemies had brought against him, he presented himself before them with the ease and assurance of conscious innocence. Isabella seems to have had all her doubts dispelled as soon as she was once more able to see and speak to Columbus. Not one word of blame would appear to have been spoken in the interview at Burgos, and instead of the defence he was prepared to make, Columbus was called upon to give an account of his recent voyage along the coast of Cuba, and was interrupted only by marks of interest and questions showing the most lively and intelligent curiosity.

To Ferdinand's inquiries about the mines of Hayna and the vaunted wealth which was to accrue to Spain from her colonies, Columbus replied by leading forward the brother of Caonabo wearing a massive collar and chain of gold, and presenting him to the sovereigns as the cacique of the golden country of Cibao. The severe look the king here cast on the enemies of Columbus, the Fonsecas and the Margarites and others of their party who stood by, convinced them that the hour of their triumph was not as near as they had fondly hoped. The reception of Columbus was altogether different from what he had expected; no mention was made of the charges brought against him or of the judicial inquiries of Aguado; and though we know from subsequent events that

in his heart Ferdinand was even at this time unfriendly, yet Isabella was incapable of dissimulation, and soon after this she wrote to Columbus a letter bearing witness to the undiminished sense she still entertained of his merits.

Columbus received the marks of royal favour with becoming modesty. Conscious of the purity of his motives and the uprightness of his actions, he had not permitted himself to be unduly depressed by the ill-treatment he had experienced; so now he was not elated by a reception which he must have considered no more than his due, nor did he seek to regain that popularity which he had found of such little value. He never wavered in his trust in the goodness and sincerity of the queen, and the numerous marks of favour he received from her made a deep impression on his heart. She honoured him with many private interviews, and seemed never weary of listening to the recital of his strange adventures in the New World, and shared with him the hope so dear to the hearts of both, of converting the natives to the Christian faith.

Encouraged by the favourable hearing he had received and the distinguished favour with which he was treated, Columbus now proposed a further enterprise, and for this purpose asked for eight ships, two to be sent to the colony with supplies, the other six to be put under his command for a more extensive voyage of discovery.

But although the queen was willing to give the most effectual support to this new enterprise, the situation of the country was such as made delay in its prosecution unavoidable. The time was almost as unpropitious as the closing period of the Moorish war had been. The treasury was drained

by European wars as well as by the profuse magnificence with which the nuptials of Prince Juan, the heir-apparent, with the Princess Margarita of Austria were now being celebrated. With such cares of an immediate and important nature pressing upon the minds of the sovereigns, the enterprises of Columbus were easily postponed, and Columbus had the mortification of seeing vast expenses incurred and all the land and naval forces of the nation put into requisition while he vainly solicited a few caravels to prosecute his discovery of a world.

The unwelcome delay was softened to him, however, by the distinguished marks he daily received of the royal favour. It was not until the spring of 1497 that his proposal received real attention. The nuptial revelries were at an end, and Isabella, whose tender maternal heart had been engrossed by concerns of a domestic nature, at last had leisure to give the requisite orders for a new expedition. But much remained to be done before these orders could be carried out, and the state of things much resembled that already described in speaking of the preparations for the first voyage. Fonseca, the enemy of Columbus, had the control of the Indian department, and though he did not dare to disobey Isabella, he was able to impede and retard all his plans, and lost no opportunity of annoying and thwarting him. The wedding of Prince Juan was followed six months after by his death, and Columbus would not intrude upon the deep affliction of the queen. But even in the midst of her distress she did not forget him; nor must we forget to mention an instance of her personal regard evinced in the time of her grief, namely, the reception, after the death of Prince

Juan, of the two sons of Columbus, Diego and Fernando, who had been in the service of the prince, as her own pages. Not until ten months after that sad event was the Admiral's fleet ready to sail. Up to the last fresh causes of delay continued to arise; shipowners put every conceivable obstacle in the way of departure, and sailors hung back unwilling to embark in a service which had fallen into such general disrepute. At the suggestion of Columbus, convicts, whose punishments were commuted into transportation to the colonies, were substituted to supply the want of willing adventurers. The expedient was a disastrous one, which brought its own punishment, and Columbus, who proposed the measure, was the first to reap the fruits of it.

At length, all being in readiness, the Admiral embarked on board his little squadron, and on the 30th of May, 1498, weighed anchor from the port of San Lucar de Barrameda. To the last moment of his sojourn in Spain he was harassed by the persecutions of his enemies. Just before starting he was assailed on board his own ship by the personal insolence of one Ximeno, a Jew, one of Fonseca's underlings, and forgetting his usual self-command he chastised him on the spot. He deeply regretted having done so, and Fonseca was not the man to let slip such a golden opportunity. Las Casas attributes the humiliating measures shortly after adopted by the sovereigns towards Columbus, and the decline of his influence at court, to the unfavourable impression produced by this incident.

Columbus' letter to the king and queen, begun on the evening of that same day, opens thus:—

"On Wednesday, the 30th of May, 1498, I started in the name of the most Blessed Trinity from the port of San Lucar, still suffering from the fatigues of my previous voyages. I had hoped on my return from the Indies to enjoy a little repose in Spain, but experienced nothing but delays and hardships."

His object was to reach the mainland. Despatching three of the ships straight to San Domingo from the Canaries, he sailed for the Cape de Verde Islands, intending thence to proceed in a south-westerly direction till he should come under the equinoctial line, but a dead calm of eight days' duration under a vertical sun made it expedient to shorten the voyage. The change of climate and the close and sultry weather brought on a severe attack of the gout, followed by fever; the mariners too lost all strength and spirits, and sunk under the oppressive heat. Much of the provisions was spoiled, and the water was nearly exhausted. Wherefore, believing himself in the longitude of the Caribbee Islands, he turned north in search of them, and on his way beheld to the west a range of mountains with three lofty summits rising above the horizon, to which, according to a vow he had made, he gave the name of La Trinidad.

In the first days of August, while coasting the island of Trinidad, land was descried to the south. It was the immense delta formed by the numerous branches of the Orinoco, and supposing it to be an island the Admiral christened it La Isla Santa, little thinking that he now for the first time beheld that mainland so long the object of his search. The ships were in great danger as they stood out to sea between the mainland and the island of Trinidad: "late at night," he writes, "being

on board of my ship, I heard as it were a terrible roaring, and as I tried to pierce the darkness I beheld the sea to the

south heaped up into a great hill, the height of the ship, rolling slowly towards us. The ships were lifted up and whirled along so that I feared we should be engulfed in the

commotion of the waters; but fortunately the mountainous surge passed on towards the entrance of the strait, and after a contest with the counter-current gradually subsided."

Through that formidable channel, to which Columbus gave the name of Bocadel Sierpe, he passed in safety a few hours after the moving mass of water had entered it, and found himself within the tranquil Gulf of Paria, which he believed to be the open sea, but was surprised on tasting it to find the water fresh. He then steered northward along the inner side of Trinidad, but when he approached the northern entrance to the gulf, seeing the foaming waves in the narrow strait he hesitated to attempt the passage. Turning westward he explored the northern boundary of the gulf. Here first the Spaniards set foot on the mainland; Columbus was too ill to go ashore himself. Besides the gout he was afflicted by a complaint in his eyes, caused by fatigue and over-watching. Had he known that he had really reached the continent, no illness would have kept him back. There is no doubt that at that moment he mistook the long promontory of Paria for an island, for he was sailing west for the purpose of finding some safer outlet than the pass between it and Trinidad, to which he gave the name of Bocadel Drago. Columbus was delighted with the beauty of the coast, and would gladly have continued to explore it. From the Indians, who came off to the ships in great numbers, he understood that the name of their country was Paria. The quantity of fine pearls they wore excited the sanguine anticipations of Columbus, and, anxious to arrive at the place where these pearls were said by the Indians to abound, he steered westward within the gulf in search of an

outlet to the north. Imperious considerations, however, compelled him to cut short his voyage and return to San Domingo. Their provisions were almost exhausted, and the supplies for the colonies were spoiling. He had sought in vain another opening, and found himself obliged to encounter the perils of the Bocadel Drago. The contest between the impetuous body of fresh water setting through the gulf and struggling for an outlet, and the ocean tide struggling to enter, was appalling, and when the ships found themselves once more safe in the open sea, "Columbus gave infinite thanks to the Lord."

He now stood to the westward along the northern coast of Paria, and on the 15th discovered the islands of Margarita and Cubagua, afterwards famous for their pearl-fisheries. On approaching their shores he saw a number of natives fishing for pearls; these they readily parted with to the sailors in exchange for plates of coloured porcelain and hawks' bells, and in a little time the Admiral had procured about three pounds weight of them, some of a very large size which he afterwards sent to the queen as specimens.

There was great temptation to linger on this favoured coast, but Columbus' eyesight was failing, so that he could no longer take observations, and his frame was racked by gout; his men too were longing to reach the colony, and on the 18th of August he turned from the island of Cubagua and steered his course for San Domingo.

What most surprised Columbus in the course of this voyage, and most powerfully excited his speculations, was the vast mass of fresh water that flows into the Gulf of Paria. No islands


BARTHELEMY
COLOMB

could contain rivers large enough to furnish such a current, the land whence it proceeded must therefore be a continent.[10] The shores of the Gulf of Paria were the borders of that continent, and the land he had seen to the south and west of Trinidad belonged to the mainland.

After sailing for five days to the north-west, he made the island of San Domingo, and dropped anchor under the little island of Beata. Thence having despatched an Indian messenger overland to his brother Bartholomew, who had remained as governor with the title of Adelantado, to announce his coming, he sailed along the coast towards the mouth of the river Ozema, where he had instructed him to found a new settlement. On the way he was met by his brother, who having received his letter had hastened forth in a caravel to welcome him. The Admiral apprehended bad news concerning the fortunes of the settlement during his long absence, but what he heard from the Adelantado exceeded his worst anticipations. He knew that his brother, to whom he had delegated his authority on leaving, had been regarded by the turbulent part of the colonists as a mere intruder.

Bartholomew had displayed all the energy and discretion Columbus had credited him with. Seeing it was vain to attempt to win the affection of men incapable of a single good feeling, he ruled them by fear. Instead of the velvet glove Columbus had handled them with, he curbed them with an iron gauntlet. The measure might have been successful in the long run, if he had only had to deal with men of his own stamp, as some of the Europeans were, particularly when Columbus' favourable reception at court became known.

But the prime mover of disturbance in the colony was one Francisco Roldan, a man whom Columbus, on account of his natural capacities, had raised from poverty and obscurity and appointed chief judge of the island on his departure for Spain. Jealous of the authority of the Adelantado, whose superior in talent he felt himself to be, and troubled by no inconvenient scruples of duty or conscience, Roldan soon made a party among the most daring and dissolute of the colony, and did all he could to stir up the mutinous spirits to throw off the disagreeable restraints of law.

When the royal appointment confirming the Adelantado in his office arrived, he hoped to detach the base and perfidious Roldan from the group of his enemies; and as for the accomplices or rivals of that dangerous character, stern measures had already all but awed them into submission, when a new element of disorder arose to complicate the state of things.

When Columbus departed with Aguado all the island, as he believed, had been reduced to subjection, except the tribes in the western principality of Xaragua, governed by the cacique Behechio, brother-in-law of Caonabo, who had remained neutral. A year passed without any apparent change in the rather ambiguous dispositions of this chief towards the Spaniards, by whom he could neither be regarded as an enemy nor as an ally.

At any moment his independence might prove injurious to the Spanish authority, if he were to side with one of the factions which divided the colony. Nor indeed was it long before it began to be rumoured that Roldan was endeavouring to enlist him in his party.

The Adelantado at once determined to try by friendly means to prevent any such alliance being formed.

Anacoana, the accomplished and really admirable widow of Caonabo, was the sister of the cacique Behechio, and had thrown herself upon his protection after her husband's death, and with a view of paying her a conciliatory visit and showing her deference, Bartholomew set out at the head of a body of picked troops for the province of Xaragua.

Flattered by this homage, Anacoana succeeded in persuading her brother, who had advanced with forty thousand men to resist them, to welcome the Spaniards as friends. She herself organized a succession of brilliant festivities in their honour, and so charmed the Adelantado by her grace and virtue, that they parted with mutual assurances of admiration and esteem.

All fear of hostility in that quarter being removed, Bartholomew marched with his troops into the Vega Real, where Guarionex, who had suffered grievous wrong, was once more in arms against the Spaniards.

After having defeated and taken this cacique prisoner, whom he restored to liberty in answer to the prayers of his subjects, he had ordered two of the inferior caciques, who had forced Guarionex to take up arms, to be put to death.

When, shortly after this, he returned to collect the tribute in Xaragua and to receive the homage of Behechio, Roldan, the chief judge of the island, thought it a favourable opportunity to raise the standard of revolt and represent himself to the Indians as their protector. The most unfavourable news respecting Columbus had just arrived from Spain. He was

reported to be in deep disgrace, and one of the proofs adduced was that the elevation of Bartholomew to the dignity of Adelantado had not been officially confirmed.

Such was the state of things in the colony when Columbus, emaciated by fever, blind, and almost dying, came into port and received back the government at his brother's hands.

The Admiral's first act was publicly to confirm all the measures of his brother, and denounce Roldan and his associates; at the same time he wrote a letter to Roldan, too long to be cited here, but which it is impossible to conceive any right-feeling man could resist.

But Roldan was only a clever man, and was less moved by the letter than by the earnest admonitions of Carvajal by which it was enforced. Alonzo Sanchez de Carvajal was captain of one of the three caravels detached by Columbus from the fleet at the Canaries to carry supplies to the colonies. The three caravels arrived off Xaragua, and Roldan had succeeded in persuading some of the men to join his party, and in obtaining weapons and provisions. When the captains found out the real character of the guests they had admitted on board their vessels, two of them sailed for San Domingo, and Carvajal remained on shore to endeavour to induce Roldan to return to his allegiance. He could not persuade him and his band to immediate submission, but Roldan promised, the moment he heard of Columbus' arrival, to proceed to San Domingo and explain his past conduct.

Strong doubts existed in the minds of those about Columbus as to the uprightness of Carvajal, but, as in the case of Guacanagari, the Admiral discarded all suspicion, and resolved

to trust him implicitly; and again he had the satisfaction of finding that his confidence had not been misplaced.

Carvajal succeeded, after some months, in bringing back Roldan to his allegiance, but not until Columbus had been compelled to make the most humiliating concessions.

Nearly a year elapsed after the Admiral's return to San Domingo before he succeeded in allaying the intestine feuds of the colony. Meanwhile the most injurious imputations on his conduct were poured into the ears of the sovereigns by numbers of the disaffected colonists who had returned to Spain, and the reward of all his zeal and wisdom was that on the morning of the 23d of August, 1500, whilst he was surveying the works at Fort Conception, he received the following letter:—

"Don Christopher Columbus, our Admiral of the Ocean Sea, we have ordered the commander Don Francisco de Bobadilla, bearer of this present, to say certain things to you he has been charged with. We beg that you will give him implicit faith and credence, and act in accordance with his behests."

The letter was signed by the king and queen, and what the Admiral was to hear was a summons from the commander Bobadilla, who had already taken up his residence in the palace of the governor, to appear before him.

Nothing at that moment would have been easier than for Columbus to resist the commands of government. All the caciques of the Vega, Guarionex, Behechio, Guacanagari, and their subjects, would, at a word from him or a sign from Anacoana, have risen against the new governor. Bobadilla was so persuaded that he would have to encounter an armed

resistance, that when the Admiral appeared before him with the confidence, which I will not say his innocence, but his virtue gave him, the petty tyrant could not believe his eyes. But no sooner had he recovered his senses than he revenged himself for the alarm which had taken possession of him by putting Columbus in irons, and after a month of the most rigorous captivity and a sort of pretence trial, Christopher Columbus—we seem to be dreaming as we read the words—Christopher Columbus, separated from his brothers, who were confined on board another ship, set sail for Spain, loaded with chains like the vilest malefactor.

LAST VOYAGE, AND DEATH

CHAPTER X.

The race of the Bobadillas is the same in every age and in every country, as short-sighted and impolitic in their measures and course of action as they are base and cruel.

Little, no doubt, did the Bobadilla who put Columbus in chains think that he was thereby merely adding to his victim's glory, still less did he suspect that with those chains he was rivetting himself for ever to that hero's pedestal.

Common sense might have told him that an excess of severity invariably serves to defeat itself, and that a respectful intimation to Columbus, to whom the lightest command of the sovereigns had ever been a law, that he was to proceed to Spain would have answered the same purpose as the ignominious fetters which aroused the disgust and indignation even of his worst enemies.

But so completely had malice and fear blinded this agent of bureaucratic spite, that when he heard the scoffs and curses sent after Columbus and his brothers on their departure by the miscreant rabble, he fancied he had accomplished a great deed.

For the honour of humanity let us not here omit the fact recorded by Las Casas, that when, by Bobadilla's orders, the irons had been brought, the only one who could be found willing to incur the infamy of fastening them on the Admiral was "a graceless and shameless cook, who rivetted them with as much readiness and alacrity as though he were serving him with choice and savoury viands."

And indeed, hardly had the *Gorda*, with Columbus on board, weighed anchor than a moral reaction set in in favour of the great man who had been subjected to such cruel outrages, and those who had been most vehement in their outcries against him were now as vehement in their reprobation of Bobadilla.

Once fairly at sea, the captain of the caravel, a worthy

pilot, Andreas Martin by name, and Alonzo de Villejo, the officer appointed to take charge of the prisoners to Spain, presented themselves before the Admiral and besought him to allow his irons to be taken off.

Deeply moved at this mark of their respectful sympathy, Columbus, nevertheless, refused to accept any surreptitious alleviation of his sufferings; "by their majesties' authority," he said, "Bobadilla has put upon me these chains; I will wear them until they shall order them to be taken off." And Ferdinand Columbus tells us that his father kept the fetters in which he was brought home, hanging up in an apartment of his house, as a perpetual memorial of a nation's ingratitude, and requested that when he died they might be buried in the same grave with himself.

He solaced himself in the course of his voyage by penning a long letter to Doña Juana de la Torre, nurse of Prince Juan and the intimate friend of the queen. This letter, intended for the eyes of the queen, which contained an account of all that had happened, together with a species of apology for his conduct, not only expresses the lofty resignation and absolute confidence in God which formed the basis of his character, it likewise, in a manner, as the following passage will suffice to show, meets and refutes, as it were by anticipation, the charges brought against him.

"I ought not to be looked upon as a governor of a well-regulated city or province, subject to a regular administration and well-established laws which can be literally enforced; what I have the right to demand is that I should be judged as a captain sent to the Indies from Spain to subdue a

numerous and warlike people, differing from ours in manners and religion, and living not in regular towns but scattered in forests and mountains," &c. To this Columbus might further have added that his penal system was far from being as rigorous as that already in force amongst the natives when he came amongst them. And with regard to his having reduced these same natives to temporary slavery, what other means had Spanish indolence on the one hand and Spanish greed for wealth on the other left him of working the mines and cultivating the soil?

Personally, though his views respecting slavery were different from those of our day, his horror of it was so great that he himself never owned a single slave, whilst there were those amongst his fiercest calumniators who were themselves the owners of hundreds.

Had his prophetic power not failed him in that hour, this man, the only individual who, up to that time, had succeeded in gaining the affection of the Indians, might have ended the controversy by foretelling that the measures of his administration which met with such severe censure in 1500, would form in 1510 the colonial code, and that in 1864 the most civilized nations of Europe, and those most hostile to slavery, would have had all but effected the extermination of the aborigines of the New World—not to speak of Oceania; and all, alas! by virtue of that law, a hard one no doubt, but according to what appears the design of Providence, that the inferior races should die out and become extinct in the presence of the superior.

But, Heaven be praised, Columbus was not to find it a hard

matter to justify his conduct; once more he was to speak in defence of his enemies, and so little did he fail them that the majority owed the fulfilment of the promises that had been made to them to his charitable representations.

Columbus' arrival in Cadiz produced very nearly as great a sensation as his return from his first voyage. His chains did not clank in vain on the stones of the old pier; the echo of their sound rang from soul to soul till it reached the court and awakened the sleeping conscience of the queen. From less delicate motives and more personal, no doubt Ferdinand shared her emotion and indignation; he protested that his intentions had been grossly misconstrued and his instructions outstepped. Fonseca himself acknowledged that his agent had gone too far, and in the naval office the fatal epithet, *Zélé*, was affixed to Bobadilla's name.

A year later both epithet and name were erased from the registers of that same office, and Bobadilla, stripped of his functions, perished, as did the other enemies and detractors of Columbus.

When the letter addressed to Doña Juana de la Torre was read to Isabella she at once despatched a courier to Columbus deploring the treatment he had received, and inviting him to come to her at once.

He travelled to Grenada and presented himself at court, not as on the previous occasion in the humble habit of St. Francis, but richly attired as a lord, an admiral, a viceroy, with the calm assurance and dignified bearing befitting his rank, his services, and his character. The king, however he might have secretly felt disposed against him, received him

with unqualified favour and distinction; whilst the queen, when she beheld the noble old man, and thought on all his sufferings, was moved to tears, and insisted that the recall of Bobadilla and the restitution of all Columbus' rights and privileges should precede any word of vindication on his part.

Though in other respects far from being so, morally the

reparation was from that moment complete. Columbus himself felt that his immediate reappointment to the government of San Domingo would be likely to occasion disturbances in the island, and offered no objection to the sending out of a provisional commandant whom Ferdinand was fully determined in his own mind should not be recalled.

But Columbus' impatience of inaction, the great inclination he had to serve the sovereigns, and his indomitable spirit,

would not long let him rest, and on the 9th of May, 1502, untamed by disappointment and unconquered by opposition, the veteran navigator once more set sail from Cadiz with four caravels and one hundred and fifty men, not for the purpose of resuming his post in the colony, but on a simple voyage of discovery. He was permitted to take with him in this expedition his brother Bartholomew, whom he placed in command of one of the caravels, and his son Fernando, then in his fourteenth year.

To follow the course of Columbus step by step to the end, and give a comprehensive account of this his fourth and last voyage, which was one unbroken series of disappointment and misfortune, would lead us far beyond the limits prescribed for us here. We must content ourselves, therefore, with taking a cursory glance at the chief events, and subjoining a few passages from the famous Jamaica letter.

Leaving the Canaries, where, as on former occasions, the vessels tarried some days taking in the needful supplies, the trade-winds were so favourable that in sixteen days the little squadron arrived without shifting a sail at the Caribbee Islands: thence, continuing along the inside of the Antilles to Santa Cruz, they steered for San Domingo and dropped anchor in sight of Isabella. One of the vessels being an extremely bad sailer, the Admiral was desirous of exchanging it for one of the fleet that had recently conveyed the new governor to San Domingo, and knowing, moreover, from various indications, that a storm was coming, he at the same time sent to request permission to shelter his squadron in the harbour. This favour, which the humblest pilot might have

claimed as a right, Nicolas de Ovando denied to Columbus, by whom the harbour had been originally discovered.

Columbus revenged himself after his fashion, by sending again to Ovando, and entreating him not to allow the fleet, which was on the point of returning to Spain with Bobadilla and Roldan, and an immense sum of ill-gotten wealth, to put to sea, assuring him that a tremendous storm was imminent.

But his warning was derided, and whilst he ran for a little haven on the coast the fleet of Bobadilla stood out confidently to sea. Two days later the tempest burst over it and all the ships foundered, with the exception of one, the smallest and the frailest, which had on board the revenue due to Columbus, and which alone reached Spain in safety.

The Admiral kept close to the shore, and his ship sustained no damage whatever: the other three, driven about for several days at the mercy of the elements, suffered more or less injury.

"Was ever man, even Job himself," writes Columbus to the sovereigns, "so unfortunate? The very harbours which at the peril of my life I had discovered refused to shelter me, my friends, my brother, my son, when death was threatening us."

Carried by the currents along the south of Cuba, Columbus resolved without loss of time to bend his course to the passage he expected to find to the ocean beyond. Then followed a weary struggle with winds and waves. "For eighty-eight days," he writes, "the dreadful tempest never left us: my people were very sickly, all contrite for their sins, and many with promises to enter into religion, and not one without vows of pilgrimage and the like." The leaks continually gained upon his vessels, which were so strained that all their seams opened;

the sails and rigging were rent, almost all their anchors and cables lost. He had constant cause to lament having brought his son Fernando with him, exposing him at so tender an age to such great perils and hardships, although the boy bore them with the courage and fortitude of a veteran. "And," he writes, "a thought which rends my heart, is that I have left my younger son, Diego, behind in Spain, bereft of his father and destitute of fortune, but I trust that he will find in your majesties just and grateful princes who will requite with usury all that your service has deprived him of."

Whilst giving expression to these moving lamentations he was beating his way against contrary winds along the coast of Honduras. At length, on the 14th of September, a month after leaving the Cape of Honduras, he reached a point where the coast bends south, thus giving them a short respite of fair wind and free sailing. To this point Columbus gave the name of *Gracias a Dios,* in commemoration of their sudden release from danger, and two days later they dropped anchor near a river, up which the boats were sent in search of the much-needed supplies of wood and water. One of them was upset on returning, by the rapid current, and the whole crew perished, whence the river was named *El Rio del Desastre.*

Quitting this unlucky neighbourhood and sailing along the Mosquito shore, Columbus, under the influence of one of his frequent delusions, left the great wealth of Veragua unexplored, toiling painfully eastward, along the Isthmus of Panama in search of the supposed passage into the Indian Ocean, which he flattered himself could be at no great distance.

But few of his companions sympathized with him in his zeal

for mere discovery. With great difficulty they advanced somewhat beyond the point of Nombre de Dios, when adverse winds compelled them to take refuge in a harbour, named, on account of its small size, *El Retrete*, or the Cabinet. There, after encountering the hostility of the natives, whom the lust and avarice of the strangers roused to exasperation, Columbus was compelled by the murmurs of his men to relinquish the prosecution of his voyage eastward, and retrace his course in search of the gold mines of Veragua.

On the 6th of January, 1503, the caravels reached the river Belen in Veragua, and two days afterward Columbus wrote to the sovereigns that in that time he had seen more signs of gold than in Hispaniola in the space of four years, and that here was the place to found a settlement. But again his plans were defeated by the discontent of the crews, the ferocity of the natives, and the violent hurricanes, and after many vicissitudes which it would take too long to relate he bade farewell to the terra firma, and on the 1st of May, 1503, stood northward in quest of San Domingo.

Though forced to pass over thus briefly all the particulars of Columbus' sojourn in Veragua, and the difficulties and anxieties to which he was exposed, I cannot refrain from inserting his own account, contained in his letter to the sovereigns, of a kind of vision which came to comfort when filled with despondency and broken down by pain and pressing care. "Tormented by fever and weighed down with fatigue, all hope of relief was extinguished within me. Wearied and groaning, I fell into a deep sleep, when I heard a gentle voice saying to me, 'Oh, fool, and slow to believe and serve thy God,

the God of the universe! What did He more for Moses, or for His servant David? From the time that thou wert born He has ever taken great care of thee. When He saw thee of a fitting age, did He not make thy name resound gloriously throughout the earth? The Indies, those rich regions of the world, did He not give them thee for thine own? did He not leave thee free to dispose of them to others according to thy pleasure? Of the chains, so mighty that they could not be broken, that shut up the gates of the ocean sea, He delivered thee the keys. Thou wert obeyed in the most distant lands, and thy glory was proclaimed among all Christians. . . . Turn to Him then and acknowledge thine error, for His mercy is infinite. Thine age shall be no obstacle to the great things reserved for thee.

"Abraham, was he not above an hundred years when he begat Isaac? Uncertain is the succour thou criest for, . . . but the promises which God has made thee He has never broken; nor said, after having received thy services, that His meaning was to be understood in a different sense. . . . All that He promises He fulfils, and with usury. Behold this is what thy Creator has done for thee! Show me if thou canst the reward of the toils and perils thou hast endured for others."

"And I," adds Columbus, "weighed down as I was by suffering, distinctly heard all this, and had no power to reply, excepting to weep for my errors. The voice that spake to me finished by saying:

"Be hopeful and take courage! thy works are written in marble, and justice will in due time be done unto thee."

The above passages form part of the so-called *lettera*

rarissima, and have been compared for their sublimity to the Holy Scriptures.

The letter was written in Jamaica, where Columbus was permitted to linger more than a year through the malice of Ovando, the governor of San Domingo.

One caravel had already been abandoned on account of her leaky condition, when Columbus saw himself forced to give up his long and arduous struggle with the elements, and run the two remaining vessels aground on the coast of Jamaica lest they should founder and all on board perish.

In this emergency the brave Diego Mendez volunteered to try and make his way to San Domingo, inform Ovando of their desperate situation, and demand help from him. Should his attempt be successful he would proceed from San Domingo to Spain bearing Columbus' letter to the sovereigns.

The Admiral gladly accepted the offer, and having succeeded in procuring two canoes from the natives, Mendez, accompanied by a loyal and devoted Genoese of the house of the Fieschi, six Spaniards, and twenty Indians, set out for San Domingo.

Meanwhile Columbus and the remainder of his company prepared to make the best of their forlorn situation. Judging it expedient, as far as possible, to restrain his men from intercourse with the natives for fear of hostilities, which in their defenceless condition it would be difficult for them to repel, Columbus caused the two battered ships which lay deeply bedded in the sand to be fastened together, and thatched cabins to be erected fore and aft for shelter. No one was allowed to go on shore without special permission, and two men were

appointed to control all bargains with the natives, bringing stores to the ships. Thus entrenched in the sea they awaited Fiescho's return. Eight long months passed, during which nothing was seen or heard of the canoes so anxiously looked for. By degrees the supplies began to fall off, the men to grow sickly, and murmurs to break forth among them. At length the discontent grew to an open mutiny, and forty-eight of the crew, with Francisco and Diego Porras at their head, possessing themselves of ten canoes which the Admiral had obtained from the natives, deserted the wrecks with the intention of making their way to San Domingo. But adverse winds soon drove them back to the shores they had left; and despairing of their enterprise they abandoned their canoes, and wandered from village to village plundering the natives and behaving towards them in the most arbitrary and cruel manner.

Columbus, in the meantime, was doing all in his power by wise and kindly treatment of the remnant of his garrison, and scrupulous good faith and friendly behaviour towards the natives, to ward off the evils that threatened his little community.

But the difficulty of obtaining supplies increased daily. Roused to enmity by the licentious conduct of the mutineers, the Indians showed themselves more and more unwilling to supply their fellow-countrymen with provisions, hoping in time to starve out the enemy. At length, when famine stared them in the face, Columbus' inventive genius providentially came to their rescue. Recollecting that an eclipse of the moon was imminent, he informed the natives that to punish them for refusing to furnish the wonted supplies the moon would withhold her light.

When a few hours afterwards the natives did in fact behold a shadow stealing over the moon, and the whole disc by

degrees obscured, they gave themselves up for lost. Seizing whatever they could lay their hands on in the way of provisions, they hurried in swarms to the wrecks and threw them-

selves with cries and lamentations at the feet of Columbus, imploring him to have compassion on them, and assuring him that henceforth all they possessed was at his service.

Columbus kept them in suspense until the eclipse was nearly over, and then informed them that on condition of their fulfilling their promises his God would pardon them this time, but if they failed to do so, some great evil would overtake them.

From that day they regarded him with the greatest awe and reverence, and all difficulty of obtaining the necessary supplies was at an end. Not many days after this occurrence a small vessel arrived from San Domingo bringing Columbus a barrel of wine and a side of bacon, with a promise from Ovando that a vessel large enough to bring them all off should be sent as soon as possible to their relief.

At last, on the 13th of August, 1504, Columbus and his brother Bartholomew reached San Domingo, but not before the politic Ovando had taken measures to prevent their return thither from entailing any danger on himself.

Knowing the favour and sympathy with which the queen Anacoana had always regarded them, and dreading the part she might play if they were not treated with due respect on their return, he resolved by the foulest treachery to rid himself, in time, of his possible foe.

Irving describes as follows the massacre at Xaragua, and the horrible fate of the beautiful and renowned Anacoana—the friend of the Spaniards, as she has justly been called.

"The Indians had entertained their guests with various national games, Ovando invited them in return to witness certain games of his country. . . . The cavalry and foot

soldiers had their secret instructions. . . . At the appointed time the square was crowded with the Indians waiting to see the spectacle. . . . The caciques were assembled in the house of Ovando, which looked upon the square. None were armed, an unreserved confidence prevailed among them, totally incompatible with the dark treachery of which they were accused. . . . Ovando left his game . . . and gave the fatal signal. . . . The house in which Anacoana and all the principal caciques were assembled was surrounded by soldiery . . . and no one was permitted to escape. They entered, and seizing upon the caciques, bound them to the posts which supported the roof. Anacoana was led forth a prisoner. The unhappy caciques were then put to horrible tortures, until some of them in the extremity of anguish were made to accuse their queen and themselves of the plot with which they were charged. When this cruel mockery of judicial form had been executed, instead of preserving them for after examination, fire was set to the house, and all the caciques perished miserably in the flames. While these barbarities were practised upon the chieftains, a horrible massacre took place among the populace. . . . No mercy was shown to age or sex; it was a savage and indiscriminate butchery. . . . As to the Princess Anacoana, she was carried in chains to San Domingo. The mockery of a trial was given her, in which she was found guilty on the concessions which had been wrung by tortures from her subjects, and on the testimony of their butchers, and she was ignominiously hanged in the presence of the people whom she had so long and so signally befriended."
—Irving's *Life of Columbus.*

Whilst these atrocities were being enacted in the New World, Queen Isabella was nearing the grave where the last earthly hopes of Columbus were to be buried with her.

When on the 7th of November, 1504, her great Admiral landed at San Lucar, Isabella lay on her death-bed.

The influence of Columbus' enemies at court was so powerful, that he well knew that without immediate personal application he had not the slightest hopes of obtaining the recognition of his honours and rights; but he was so much crippled by gout and worn out with suffering as to be unable himself to undertake a journey to Segovia, where the court then was, and intercede on his own behalf. He therefore sent the faithful Diego Mendez to lay his cause before the sovereigns and support his interests. On her couch of anguish the queen received her trusty servant's envoy, heard with grief and horror what a Fonseca, a Bobadilla, and an Ovando had done with her colonies, shed tears at the fate of the unfortunate Anacoana, and promised, if God would grant her time, to avenge her cause.

A few days later, Columbus received the afflicting intelligence that his noble benefactress and faithful friend, on whose steady support he had so firmly relied in this the hour of his greatest need, had breathed her last.

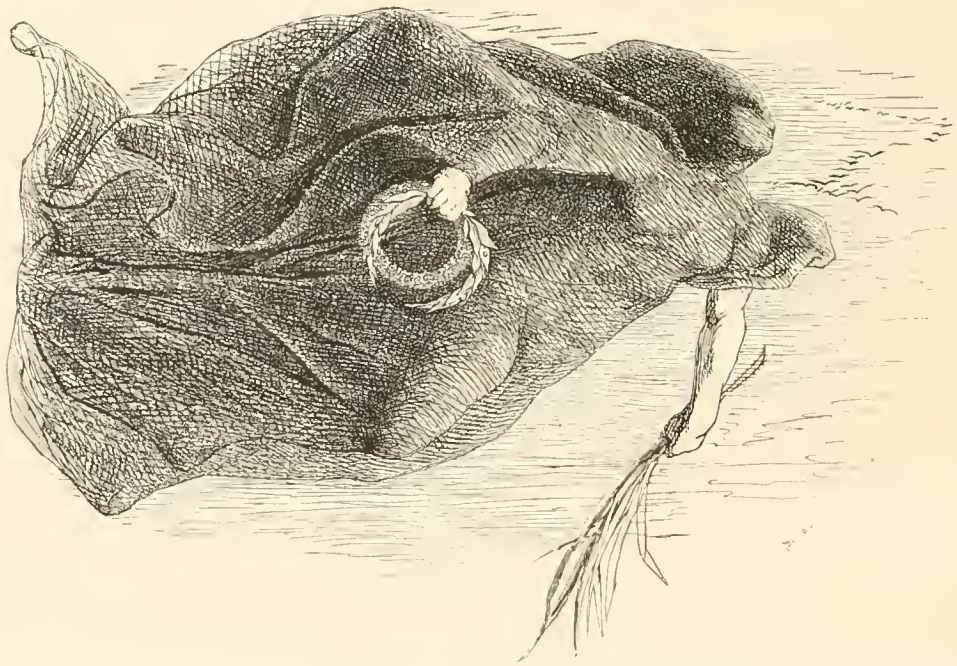
Queen Isabella expired on the 26th of November, 1504, and from that time Columbus experienced nothing but evasive promises, weary delays, and cruel disappointments. Many months were spent by him in unavailing attendance at court. "As far as actions went," wrote Las Casas, "the king not merely showed him no signs of favour, but, on the contrary,

discountenanced him as much as possible, yet he was never wanting in complimentary expressions."

Care and sorrow, the cold ingratitude of Ferdinand, and that hope deferred which "maketh the heart sick," hastened his end. With a constitution impaired by a life of continual hardship and fatigue, his health rapidly gave way, and on the 20th of May, 1506, in a poor inn in Seville, after having attended to all the claims of affection, loyalty, and justice, and received the last sacrament, he expired with little apparent suffering, and in the most Christian spirit.

The feast of the Ascension was the day of his release; he wore his Franciscan habit as Isabella had done on her death-bed, and his last words were:—

"In manus tuas, Domine, commendo spiritum meum."



Christopher Columbus disappeared from the world almost as quietly as he had entered it, owing, principally, to the tremendous revolution he had made in it during his lifetime. The impulse he gave to discovery was so great that in less than forty-five years the greater part of the coasts of the two Americas had been explored and vast domains conquered in their interior. It is not surprising, therefore, that in the Old World as in the New, his death made less noise than his life and achievements. Seven years had elapsed, and poets still sang of his fame as if he were alive, and to many, even in Spain, the tardy honour conferred on his remains in 1513 by Ferdinand was the first intelligence of his death.

His body was first laid in the convent church of the Franciscans in Valladolid, and thence, seven years later, carried with funereal pomp to Seville and interred in the Carthusian monastery of Las Cuevas. From this spot it was transported in the year 1536 to the Cathedral Church of San Domingo, and on the cession of that island to France in 1795 again removed to Cuba, its present resting-place.

On the death of Columbus his son Diego, in whose favour he had been allowed in 1498 to found a "majoratus," or perpetual deed of entail, was put in possession of a portion

of his paternal rights. To his subsequent alliance with Doña Maria de Toledo, niece to the celebrated Duke of Alva, the king's chief favourite, he owed the recall of Ovando and his own appointment to the government of San Domingo.

There, supported by his uncles Bartholomew and Diego, he carried out, as far as lay in his power, his father's system of administration. But, like his unfortunate father, the services he rendered to the king were requited only with ingratitude; like him he was summoned to Spain to vindicate his conduct, and was declared innocent; and like him died, worn out by fatigue and vexation in the pursuit of justice to his claims, on the 21st of February, 1526.

Shortly before his death, Bartholomew, who had been appointed governor of the little island of Mona, and Diego died at St. Domingo at the residence of their niece, the vice-queen, both without issue. Fernando Columbus, the Admiral's second son, survived his uncles until the year 1539. He devoted himself much to letters, and his most important work is the history of his father, an invaluable and trustworthy document.[11] He died at Seville, also without issue.

Of the six children which Don Diego had by Doña Maria de Toledo, Don Luiz, the eldest, received, in 1537, the titles of Duke of Veragua and Marquis of Jamaica, with a perpetual grant of twenty-five square leagues of the island.

In the year 1578 the male line of Christopher Columbus was declared to have become extinct in the person of the fourth Admiral who had a right to bear that great name, but the title of Duke of Veragua is still borne with distinction by a collateral branch of the illustrious house of Columbus.

NOTES.

[1] The spelling of the name differs according to the language in which it is written: in Italian it is Cristofforo Columbo, or Cristoforo Colombo: in Spanish, Cristoval Colon.

[2] Riviera de Levante, and Riviera de Ponente, are the names given to the east and west coasts of the Gulf of Genoa.

[3] The arms of the Columbi were: three silver doves on a field of azure; the crest surmounted by the emblem of justice, the motto: Fides, spes, charitas. With slight differences, these arms were common to the Columbi of Placentia, Montferrat, and Liguria.

[4] As this dragon strangles them,
So Genoa crushes her enemies.

[5] Oviedo y Valdez, "Histoire naturelle et générale des Indes," etc., liv. ii., chap. iii.; translated by Jean de Ponleur, valet to Francis I.

[6] Plut. *de facie in lunæ.* We cite this strange aberration on the part of the great man as an excuse for certain other and no less strange opinions of his. Let us not forget that at a time when, thanks to the perfection of our optical instruments, the moon was brought 90,000 leagues nearer, we all gave more or less credence to the ingenious mystification of the supposed Selenites.

[7] Aristotle *On the Universe*, and *Wonderful Stories*—these two treatises, probably inspired by the Aristotelian tradition, are ancient but apocryphal.

[8] Columbus not only took count of the horary movement of the Pole Star, but was the first to establish the fact that the magnetic needle points, not as it had until then been supposed to do, to our geographical pole, but to a point west of it, since designated the magnetic pole.

[9] The European who first reached the mainland of the New World was most probably Sebastian Cabot, a Venetian. In 1496, sailing in the employ of England, he coasted the shores of Labrador, but, as Humboldt justly observes, the honour of having discovered a

country appertains to him who first explored even the smallest portion of it. With regard to the famous Amerigo Vespucci, were he even proved to have been the first to visit the Continent, the fact would not have justified the name which was given to the New World by a chain of chances to which he, who has profited thereby, never wittingly contributed.

[10] "Histoire générale des Antilles, de Saint Cristofle (sic), de la Guadaloupe, de la Martinique et d'autres isles habitées par les Français," by Père Dutertre; 4 vols. 8vo, Paris, 1667–1671.

[11] Fernando Colombo, Istorie, nelle quali si ha particolare e vera relazione della vita e de fatti dell ammiraglio Crist. Colombo suo padre, etc., Venezia, 1571. The original text of this work having been lost, Cotolendy made his French translation from the Italian version; 1 vol. 8vo, Paris, 1681.

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